

ARNOLD'S

LIBRARY OF THE FINE ARTS.

Vol. I.]

DECEMBER, 1832.

[No. 2.

MEMOIR OF W. HOGARTH.

THE task of biography is one of considerable delicacy, if not of difficulty; it involves the necessity of abstracting the rigid impartiality of pure reason from the concomitant trammels of sense: it requires us to annul the stimuli of circumstances, to renounce the bias of education and temperament; and to rely alone on the forcible, yet too often stifled appeal of unambitious truth. The courtly mind of an Orford or a Chesterfield would be as ill suited to the task of conveying to posterity the reputation of a Barry, a Hogarth, or a Morland, as the Muse of Burns to celebrate the tact and refinement of a constitutional courtier. Apart from the received laws of morality or Christian observance, and the duties imposed by civilization, each man of vivid thought and deep passion creates a world of his own; which minor orb rolling on its own axis may be governed by its own laws, provided they thwart no regulation of the general system.

After such an announcement of the difficulties of the task, and the hopeless perfection required, it savours of arrogance to attempt that, of which we have declared so many incapable: it is so doubtless; yet are we content to do our humble best, and resign ourselves to the inevitable fate that attends all human biography.

Without stopping to ascertain so important a fact as whether the name of our immortal painter is spelt Hogard, Hogart, or Hogarth, we will assume the general tone, and accept the latter orthography. He was born in London, the 10th of December, 1698, and was descended from a reputable family; although his father after various unsuccessful pursuits, and as Mr. Cunningham, in his lively and interesting biography, informs us, after having "kept—it is not known how long—a school; and having sought in vain for the distinction of an author and

the patronage of the powerful, sunk under disappointed hope and incessant labour about the year 1721, leaving one son, WILLIAM, and two daughters, whose names were Ann and Mary."

Having the melancholy example of his father's unproductive talents before his eyes, it is not wonderful that the strong sense of Hogarth should urge a cessation of scholastic acquirements, and desire some less ambitious mode of maintenance. Some writers have attributed this step to his lurking fondness for drawing; but as we intend to trace it engendered and encouraged by favourable circumstances, gradually assuming the character of confirmed genius, we consider his apprenticeship to Ellis Gamble, a silversmith and plateworker, as the result of the paternal example operating on his shrewd and calculating mind. We cannot do better than avail ourselves of Mr. Cunningham's excellent authority, to rescue Hogarth from the ignorance which has been attributed to him; the classical attainments of the father may not have descended to the son, yet plead in favour of a decent education bestowed on the latter. It is not probable that the father, who was never branded with the title of a drunkard or a spendthrift, could have beheld his only son,—endowed with much natural sagacity, disgrace his own acquirements.

According to his own account, at the age of twenty, engraving was the height of his ambition; to this feeling we may attribute the exquisite minutiae that lends such a charm to his works, which, united to the powers of mimicry he displayed while young, formed a painter of such amazing excellence and power, that vice and folly shrunk abashed from the mirror which betrayed their depravity, and tore the mask of *sufferance* from their degraded features. The reproduction of "heraldic anomalies," however exciting to a mind of moderate power, in its maze of ingenious vagaries, failed to rivet the attention, or claim the exclusive homage of the "*industrious apprentice*." The glories of St. Paul's and Greenwich Hospital fired his aspiring mind with additional ardour; and feeling that the eccentricities of heraldry were as far removed from real art, as doggerel from pure verse, he appears to have entered the academy of Sir James Thornhill, in St. Martin's Lane, to obtain a basis of that knowledge which should enable him to outstep his early aspirations. The monotony of academic studies seems to have ill accorded with the tendency of his original mind—he panted for the race of emulation in the wide arena of nature—he longed to interpret her varied expressions, in his own powerful language, and to transmit her deep and gloomy recesses, where morality lies weeping over the orgies of iniquity, by the vivid truth of his daring

pencil. It could hardly be supposed that one who felt not the weakness of the student, should have owned the tyro's patience in the dull career of probation.

It is related that his first attempts at caricature were during a pot-house brawl, of which he happened to be a spectator, and a disgusting dispute between two virago's in a nocturnal haunt, where he gleaned an incident reproduced in one of his most celebrated works. Whether these scenes were in accordance with his feelings, or the result of his station in life, which opposed no bar to recreations of a dubious character, we leave others to decide. His constitutional mirth and powers of observation could not fail to be struck with the peculiarities of an age, which offered much to the artist, that is denied by the present. The whimsical and egregious costumes and manners were food for the mind of Hogarth, and he was destined to convey, in conjunction with his own powers of satire and moral humour, the glories of ample wigs and clouded canes to a delighted posterity.

Notwithstanding his inclination for painting, he deemed it prudent to continue his engraving, as a never failing means of support. It appears that he began business for himself in 1720, and was chiefly employed in designing arms and shop bills. In the course of time, his merit attracted the attention of the booksellers, and in successive years he produced several works, which, although they appear to be in no proportion with his matured genius, were steps by which he gradually raised himself to fame and riches. The first of these efforts that proclaimed the superior talent of Hogarth, were his illustrations of *Hudibras*; but of these let a more powerful pen speak. The poet biographer says with great truth and vigour, "The poetry of Butler, graphic as it is, and full of images of fun and humour, will always keep its ascendancy—and in the width of its range, and by the rapidity of its motion, baffle the rivalry of any pencil. It is not where Hogarth has followed, but where he has departed from the poet, that the charm of his embellishments lies. By one or two skilful additions, awakening a similar train of thought and humour, he has increased the graphic glee of his author."

"The Taste of the Town," or "Burlington Gate," produced in 1724, was the first work that attracted the notice of the lovers of humour. We have no objection to laugh at our own individual follies when they are mingled with the frailties of our fellow creatures; it is only when they are singly exposed that we are at all convinced of the necessity of avoiding satire. Hogarth seems to have exerted his powerful wit, more than once, against that arbiter of taste in his day—

Kent, the factotum of his age, from architecture down to dowagers' dresses! He has introduced him, in this piece, in no very enviable position :

Peace, Kent !

Come not between the dragon and his wrath !

As we do not pretend to offer an alphabetical or chronological list of the events that distinguished the various periods of his life, we will proceed at once to his marriage with the only daughter of Sir James Thornhill, in 1730, when he was in the thirty-second year of his age, and the lady in her twenty-first. Sir James, "true to the sometime infirmity of parents," did not consider the match of sufficient consequence to afford it his sanction ; and, actuated by a short-sightedness, too common to excite surprise, yet more calculated to call forth pity than blame, withheld his favour from them for the space of two years ; but was overcome at length, by the pleading of his daughter, the increasing reputation of Hogarth, and, perhaps, by a secret disapprobation of his own conduct.*

He took a house in Leicester Fields, and commenced portrait-painting, and for some time met with brilliant success ; his "Familiar and Conversation Pictures" attracting the notice of all classes ; but as nobles are ever impatient at a want of that homage they consider their birthright, and court beauties rebel at the simplicity of honesty and integrity, the reputation of Hogarth, as the satirist of the age, did not certainly plead in his favour. It is ever an ungracious task to appeal to the sympathy of individuals far removed from ordinary themes, and too often "immured within the bastile of a word." Facility of catching likenesses may attract a temporary success ; but the ultimate fortune of a portrait painter depends upon an amenity of disposition, and a tendency to *oblige*, which ill accord with the vigour of a certain style of genius. The mild and refined genius of a Reynolds or a Lawrence would ride triumphantly on the tide of fortune, whilst the genius of a Barry, a Fuseli, or an Opie, would leave them a prey to the troubled waves. Luckily for Hogarth, however, he succeeded in enlisting the public attention, if not by the deep seated qualities of his art, which were probably lost on the greater part of his admirers, by a well told tale of folly and vice, which they were not slow to perceive in its most palpable meaning, or to apply with malignant satisfaction.

* Mrs. Hogarth contrived that some of his pictures of the Harlot's Progress should be placed before her father, who was so pleased with the talent displayed in them, that he shortly became reconciled to the young people.

It may be acting the part of a friend, an injudicious one certainly, to defend the fair fame of a satirist from the imputation of personality; but it is losing sight of the duty of a philosopher, who views the effect, and in endeavouring to discover the means, cannot fail to perceive that a satire involving no personality, is a sacrifice demanding no victim. As units are required to compose tens, individual characteristics enter into the composition of a general satire; and were the type not found in an individual so selected, it would be a faint imagining alone, and forfeit the pungency requisite

“ To point a moral or adorn a tale.”

That the word satirist should have become a term of hatred and fear, is to be attributed less to the intrinsic venom of the character, than the schoolboy feeling of adult probationers, who skulk from the brandished rod, conscious of their infirmities and deserts. The true satirist is an instrument employed by outraged nature, to reinstate morality and decorum in their august tribunals; when its stream is polluted by injustice, and assails where it should protect, it loses its noblest attribute, and, from being the corrector of evil, descends to the perpetration of guilt.

We have seen, as before related, the effect of Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* on the mind of Sir James Thornhill; it succeeded no less with the public, who, delighted with moral essays invested with the charms of humour, and which all who had eyesight could relish, even if they failed to appreciate, hailed these pictorial sermons as a happy relief from the monotony of biblical illustrations, designed in the worst taste, and engraved in the most feeble manner. That they were not valued as highly as they deserved, we can readily believe, for the surprise of novelty allows the judgment but little scope, especially in an age where the arts were so little understood, either by the professors or their patrons, who had not yet received the vivid impress of Reynolds' genius to dispel the gloom of their critical knowledge. Twelve hundred subscribers' names were obtained for this work, although the *Rake's Progress*, which afterwards appeared, and was superior in character, attracted less attention. We are justified, therefore, in supposing, that their own intrinsic merit had less effect on the public than the novelty and daring of the first attempt, where he introduced a portrait of the infamous Colonel Charteris, a man of fortune and power, regardless of the probable vengeance of so reckless a character.

Hogarth's moral and physical courage appear to have been con-

siderable: the choice of his subjects implies no ordinary daring; for the mean and pusillanimous, however they may delight in the secret exercise of slander, never venture into the arena of satire, to court opposition and defy obloquy. In the *Progress of a Rake*, or a Harlot, there is a general allusion, that none can apply in detail, save as a question involving individual impropriety; but the varied materials of this broad picture of iniquity were gathered from private sources, rendering them equally objects of attraction and revenge.

The limits of a brief memoir forbid our indulging in lengthened notices of these admirable works. They are indeed too well known to require the additional homage of a humble biographer, yet to dismiss them with a slight notice would be an injustice to their merits. They present the full force of morality, without being encumbered with the concomitant disadvantages of monotony and prolixity; they are clear expositions of good and evil, stimulating to the task of self examination, that best of commentators—the human mind. There are no jesuitical loop-holes by which morality is reduced to the level of a lawyer's plea, and we can skip conveniently from one subtlety to another, deceiving ourselves into the palliation of sin. We are presented with a faithful picture of what we have perhaps seen every day, but have not observed; and we are forced into the application of truths thus concentrated, which were before scattered in their ubiquitous expansion. The piteous career of the victim of sensuality, from the sweetness of her maiden simplicity to her degraded and untimely end, are objects which must call forth the commiseration of the virtuous, and rouse the indignation of the most apathetic. The subject might have been treated with more delicacy, and perhaps more pathos; but the broad and characteristic view of this sad tale, taken by Hogarth, makes an indelible impression on the memory; and its very want of any redeeming point renders it a bold and impressive performance. It was not, in that age, reserved for the poet and the painter to throw a halo around folly, and to appeal to our sympathy in favour of sin. The chart of evil was distinctly made out; the dangerous headlands and fatal quicksands were exposed to the mariner's eye: it was reserved for a morbid sensibility and prejudicial refinement, characteristic of a later age, to throw the mantle over the hideous form of vice, to invest it with social attractions, and to lead it among the unsuspecting and innocent, to pollute by its seductive venom. Not so with Hogarth, the morality of his tales admits of no prudent doubt, no mental reservations in the applause extorted by his undeniable talent. Look at his *Rake's Progress*? Does Morality for a moment totter in the be-

holder's mind? Is he at all in danger of losing his preconceived notions of right and wrong? Let him follow the unhappy youth through his whole career of weakness and degradation: the fastidious may doubtless be affected by the undisguised truth of the various scenes, may regret, with a refined sigh, that delicacy had not more power with the painter; yet the observant and candid mind, divested of the trammels of schools, will do justice to the fearless and faithful reproduction of this impressive lesson. The unhappy female excites our unmixed pity—she is the victim of matured villany; in the career of the Rake we feel but disgust, no artful seducer is at his ear, but his own passion, we refuse him our commiseration, for he begins his despicable career, with an act of treachery to the victim of his arts, she weakly relies on the honor of a fool, that honor is forfeited—in that alone the tale is told. We are not surprised at the succeeding events, and can scarcely be brought to sigh over his fate, as he raves with blighted reason in a madhouse. His case would scarcely demand a tear, but the horror of the scene extracts our involuntary sympathy. In both of these histories the painter has brought the requisite powers to the task; he has not shrunk from the full enormity of his subject, and it is a reproach, in a hypercritical and fastidious age alone, that he has been but too faithful.

The *Marriage à la mode*, which was produced in 1745, decided his reputation; in this series he has shewn himself so consummate a painter, that panegyric alone is left to the most severe critic. The powers of the painter and the dramatic poet are equally conspicuous, and from the admirable skill displayed in the varied groups, and the character of each individual composing them, we feel the clear and forcible history, devoid of affectation or mystery. The moral beauty of wedded love soars above this degrading view of ill assorted unions, and derives additional lustre from this pollution of a sacred tie. What feelings are roused by the contemplation of a father's depravity in consigning his daughter to the living tomb of a bridegroom's couch, who has roused no feeling in her breast to sanctify the union: or of that husband bartered for gain, against one who might have been an exemplary wife and mother, had her affections been nurtured by parental love, and awakened by the devotion of a chosen lover. Yet such things are! Nature stamps man in vain with an outward impress of nobility, since the sickening vortex of passion, in its havoc whirl, ingulfs the germs of purity; and avarice, ambition, and sensuality, leave nature's blooming realm a desert waste.

In proportion as painters recede from the taste of the uninitiated,

they are apt to conclude that they arrive at some superior region, where they alone can sit in judgment on their own works; and many imagine that they have a right to bring into the field of painting productions resulting from peculiar views, of which, from necessity, they are the sole legitimate judges. As art dawned for universal illumination, such partial assumption must be deprecated, and although there are certain qualities in art—in nature indeed, which the vulgar cannot understand, that effort affords but a feeble indication of its source, which disdains the universal appeal of civilizing art, and lurks in the contracted sphere of egotistical presumption. That which is grovelling is decidedly at variance with the dignity of art, but what is low is not of necessity grovelling: it is a term expressive of grades, but not qualities, since the ingredients of greatness and goodness are bountifully scattered in the hovel as in the palace: the really low, is that which is degraded from the station it ought to hold, not that which is in its relative situation. It is with this forfeiture of right that the satirist has to deal: were he to threaten with the terrors of his lash the humble and the indigent, the misapplication of the threat would excite laughter and contempt; it would be censuring a man for being true to himself and nature, but when applied to the hardened back of infamy, the merited castigation reverberates a tale of retributive justice.

It is then with the low of inclination that the satirist has to struggle; and with them Hogarth struggled manfully. "The Times," "The Inhabitants of the Moon," and many others of his productions, prove how little he was awed in his scrutiny of man, by the accidental differences of wealth and station. A satirist, on his own account, takes much into consideration to temper his vigour; wholesome fears paralyze his arm, and his conclusions become tame and impotent, but the satirist of the world boldly assails its deficiencies, and paints it in its true colours. That Hogarth occasionally descended to wield this weapon on his own account, is scarcely to be wondered at, and to expect that a man conscious of his strength should refuse to exert it, is to exact infallibility. Wisdom united to strength generally offers plausible reasons for repelling an assailant, and not unfrequently urges to anticipate an offence. In his quarrel with Wilkes, one of a political nature, it appears that Hogarth, in his privileged character of the pictorial Cato, had the intention of lampooning the heads of the administration which Wilkes supported—he remonstrated, but to no effect, and Hogarth produced his print of "The Times." The next number of the *North Briton*, conducted by Wilkes, contained a violent

diatribe on the serjeant-painter to the king, which fire was quickly returned by our painter, in the production of the well known portrait of Wilkes; which, however biting, failed to annoy the Champion of Liberty, who jocosely parried the blow, by asserting that he grew more like his portrait every year. Churchill, the poet, joined the conflict, and in his turn was made the subject of a caricature. It is to be regretted that men of talent should be subject to the infirmity of their inferiors, thereby reducing themselves to their level. In this quarrel so little was elicited to elevate the character of either party, that we are loth to touch on it, but our duty compels us to allude to it, as having given rise to two of Hogarth's most personal satires, and as having sprung from one of his wittiest works. Wilkes' reputation we leave to the arbitrators of political duplicity, with Hogarth's alone have we any concern; but, as a dabbler in politics, we scarcely recognize our artistic Juvenal, and turn with pleasure to other parts of his career.

Hogarth, who had a considerable opinion of his own abilities, conceived that those who differed from him were wrong: and like most confident men, he felt it a duty he owed the world to publish his opinions, and account for his difference of belief, and also, to fix the fluctuating ideas of taste that misled artists and bewildered connoisseurs. With this intention, he wrote his *Analysis of Beauty*, a rough and original work, abounding in minute illustrations of a grand principle, that no one with a cultivated eye ever yet doubted. The Beauty of the serpentine line did not require the talent of Hogarth to assert its claim, yet he has decidedly placed this grand principle of Beauty in a more familiar and conspicuous light than it had hitherto appeared. But if Hogarth imagined, that by analysing the ground work of ease and elegance, he was correcting or fixing the fluctuating ideas of taste, he must have imagined taste to result more from academic rules than we are willing to admit. It is in vain that a painter is taught the means of achieving grace, unless he possess the fitting receptivities; for, however the mind, from habitual impressions, or continued application, be imbued with that perception of harmonious contour, which implies taste, the germs must have been planted before the hand was taught to fulfil the mental vision. There is much in the operations of the human mind to be referred to material agency, its perceptions and conclusions are powerfully influenced by the necessities of corporeal modifications; and that we are constitutionally vigorous or delicate, inclined either to refinement or grossness, must be sufficiently apparent. It may seem to offer a humiliating lesson to man, to attribute the effect of his proudest aspirations to a means so humble, to shackle his

soaring mind with the fetters of sense ; it is but asserting an axiom to advance that without this bond, the soul would regain its primitive immortality.

Considering this work to be the effort of a man, who, according to his own account, never took up the pen before, we cannot refuse it the credit it deserves, notwithstanding the conspicuous vanity that pervades it, and the errors likely to proceed from an artist, whose views, (in writing alone) were monopolized and contracted by a scheme of grace.

In his preface he observes of Vandyk, " He plainly appears not to have had a thought of this kind. For there seems not to be the least grace in his pictures, more than what the life chanced to bring him." This appears strange, for how are we to decide, what portion of grace was brought him by the life, or what supplied by his own taste. Indeed it is rather a metaphysical blunder, since all taste being a mental operation, the grace perceived in an external object, and attributed to it as an inherent quality exists in the painter's mind, in greater or less perfection as temperament, education, and habit have modified his perceptions. Even before the time of Hogarth, although the world had not been benefitted by his treatise, grace had delighted the human eye ; so true it is, that the perception of beauty exists without acknowledged laws to guide it, save such as are supplied by feeling and judgment. The rules both of painting and poetry may stimulate bad painters and poets, but never can create genius. Laws were founded upon the beauties and defects of those who laboured from the secret call of nature ; who wrought from the enthusiasm of exalted feelings, and were shaped into a code to repress the ambition of the eccentric, and but too often to encourage the futile powers of mediocrity. We therefore regret that a painter of Hogarth's fame should have been led into the supposition, that he alone had the true secret of taste—the key to the enchanting regions of grace ; a supposition that involves this conclusion ; since he possessed the means of achieving grace, and of fixing taste, his works should of necessity be the most replete with these two qualities. That they are not, and we regret to waive our more pleasing tribute of praise, his serious works bespeak. To the philosopher, it is neither humiliating nor painful to contemplate the inequality of human powers ; it is arrogant to deplore an harmonious and well judged restriction, and imbecile to regret an inability to soar. Those who advance with moderate hopes cannot have far to recede, it is only the impotent who recoil at the shock paralysed and despairing. Had Hogarth refrained from his vain longings, we should have believed him capable of more than he attempted, and should have assigned him the

palm of modesty; but he foolishly set the landmark of his own powers, traced their extent with unerring exactness, and consigned his name to posterity, a memento of baffled ambition. The failure, in his case, was the more to be condemned, since the attempt which led to it was urged by overweening vanity. The fable of Phaeton might opportunely have saved him from himself; but there was no willing monitor by his side, and his own counsel was his foe. His *Sigismunda*, the rival of *Correggio's*, which was to rescue British art from the fangs of criticism, was in every thing but colour a lamentable failure: the high wrought expectations, stimulated by the painter's confidence and lofty assurances, exploded in derision: and he who had told Nature's harrowing tales with superlative power, presented unwittingly to the eyes of an hitherto admiring public, a still more forcible moral, that was generally applied with unrelenting acuteness, and often with chuckling malignity and satisfied revenge.

Of his pictures in the Foundling—"The March to Finchley," "Pharaoh's daughter," and the "Portrait of Captain Coram," the respected founder of the Institution, we can only affirm that they display similar qualities to his other works. The daughter of Pharaoh, is somewhat gracefully composed and pleasingly coloured; but by the emulator of Epic dignity it would be deemed a pretty conceit, rather than a characteristic representation. Moses is a mere type of timid and fretful infancy, conveying no conviction of his future greatness. The chosen lawgiver of the Jews, and the inspired scourge of the Egyptian hosts, demanded more at the painter's hands, than the simple idea of a child rescued from his water-girt cradle, shrinking at his introduction to new faces and new scenes. Without an exaggerated anticipation of the future, the present might have indicated the germ of greatness. In the hands of Raphael the embryo chief of Israel would have urged a prescience of his glory, and the monarch's daughter would have been invested with a dignity incidental to her station. The "March to Finchley" was intended originally to have been dedicated to George II., but it could hardly be supposed that monarch would afford his sanction to a burlesque on those very guards who had done him signal service. Even granting him admiration for pictorial talent, his duty as a politic sovereign prompted the rejection of the intended honor, and the work was accordingly dedicated to Frederick of Prussia: it is a highly comic production, not however replete with the painter's highest powers. His portrait of Captain Coram is curious as resulting from a provocation, too common among men who are bigotted in their views of art. At a convivial meeting of artists at the

Foundling Hospital, Hogarth, on being taunted as a mere caricaturist, indignantly challenged his brother artists to a trial of skill in portraiture, and produced the portrait of the founder: a work replete with the qualities of vigorous drawing and character, and rich yet harmonious colouring. It stands conspicuous amidst its rivals, a monument of individual fame and national pride. Some of his smaller conversation pictures possess qualities that place him as a portraitist on a level with Reynolds, if they do not elevate him beyond the illustrious president. His colouring is often more vigorous and chaste, and his drawing more correct. There is a production by him of the family of the founder of the establishment of Broadwood, and Co., the piano forte manufacturers; pre-eminent for character, drawing, and colouring. Altogether we must consider that high as Hogarth stands with a few who can discern his talent, he remains yet to be known in his higher attributes. His merit seems at any rate to have attracted worldly advantages, he lived like a gentleman, had a decent establishment, and kept his carriage; which, although not always proofs of merit, are gratifying in our survey of his career; affording a brighter view of the destiny of genius than that which beholds but neglect and misery.

His health began to decline long before the sun of his talent was set; he retired to a house he had purchased at Chiswick, where he amused himself with slight efforts, not being able to command his former vigour of invention and execution. He rallied for a short time, and returned in 1764 to London, where after a short suffering he breathed his last, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. He was buried at Chiswick, where a monument was erected to his memory, with an inscription by Garrick.

Hogarth was certainly the most original painter of the British school. He sought no mysterious sphere of action, in which he might rouse astonishment, if he failed to excite sympathy. He appealed to the most humble as well as to the most exalted minds; and in the region of instructive and moral nature, he held undisputed sway. He grappled with the varied shades that mark the destiny of man, with vigour and fidelity, leaving scarcely a stain unexposed, or a moral slighted. Those who discover in his works the caricaturist alone, must be ignorant of the means and intention of painting; they would probably deem Homer a wholesale slaughterer, Milton an ambitious madman, Shakespeare an obscene jester, and Johnson a pompous pedant; but, to such minds the task of erecting standards of intellect has never yet devolved, and the candid and thoughtful, unswayed by prejudice or ignorance, will ever stamp Hogarth as the "painter of mankind."

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF GOVERNMENT PATRONAGE.

FOUNDED ON HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

" Wilt thou debase the heart which God refined ?
No ; let thy heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire ;
To fancy, freedom, harmony resigned,
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind."

BEATTIE'S MINSTREL.

If the word patronage implies the desire of encouraging all kinds of artists, to fill every corner of our dwellings with pictures and sculptured marble, to load the superabundant tables with well filled folios ; or if it consist in subscribing to the building of churches, hospitals, and institutions of every kind ; as well as in visiting exhibitions, in sitting for a portrait, or purchasing annuals : if these, and various other ways of spending money amongst those who are termed artists, constitute *patronage*, there can be no want of it in England ; for no where else have individuals so much money to spend, nor have others, to the same extent, made the patronage of *genius* a matter of convenience and fashion.

In 1730, the money spent on the fine arts did not amount to one-tenth part of what is now annually laid out in that way, and yet the powers of Hogarth could bud and blossom without the forcing influence of government or royal institutions : nature planted sentiment in his breast, and, pointing to the path of fame, bade observation guide him on.

That ambitious monarch, Charles V., declared that kings or emperors can never make a great painter ; but the lapse of ages has proved how usually they mar one, by fixing boundaries to the soul, rules and shackles to genius.

All princes, every state, each society, in regular succession, follow the same dull course, producing painters, sculptors, and architects, in troops ; and what the result ? Do the artists of the present day display a greater sum of proud talent than Hogarth, Reynolds, Barry, Gainsborough, or Gilpin, Stubbs, Wilson, West, and others could boast more than sixty years ago ; or are the complaints of the artists

less loud or plaintive, now that every twentieth shop is open for the sale of their works, when every leading thoroughfare affords rooms for exhibition : certainly not ; though ten times more is now expended on the fine arts than was the case a century back, genius is not on the increase ; though the number of wretched half-starved beings, who lament the alluring temptations of patronage, is at least in proportion to the increase of expenditure. The reasons are obvious, and I trust that the historical facts contained in this treatise will show, that if the fine arts had, like any other branch of national industry, been suffered to steer their own course, we should boast a Phidias or a Raphael, as we do a Milton and a Shakspeare. But, alas ! as Mr. Fuseli has too well told us, “ We have now been in possession of an academy more than half a century ; all the intrinsic means of forming a style alternate at our command ; professional instruction has never ceased to direct the student ; premiums are distributed to rear talent and stimulate ambition ; and stipends are granted to relieve the wants of genius and finish education. And what is the result ? If we apply to our exhibition, what does it present in the aggregate, but a gorgeous display of varied powers, condemned, if not to the beasts, at least to the dictates of fashion and vanity ? Florence, Bologna, and Venice, each singly taken, produced more great historic pictures than all Britain together, from its earliest attempts at painting to its present efforts.”

But let us consider what are the impediments that prevent us from attaining perfection. Our best plan will be to cast a ray of truth on all those chimerical phantoms, that rise from the stagnant fens of prejudice and ignorance, and thereby to destroy them.

Amongst the most prevalent are the following complaints :—1. That commerce and the fine arts are incompatible. 2. The climate of England is unfavourable to their progress. 3. The religion of the country is opposed to it. 4. The people unaccountably deficient in taste. 5. Our cold manners and smooth faces do not afford good models to the artist ; our costume being also most unpicturesque. 6. And lastly, that the arts can never flourish without government patronage.

First ; it is rather singular that commerce should be stigmatized as incompatible with the fine arts ; fiction, not history, spread the report. Let us see. Was ever a country distinguished in the fine arts, unless commerce constituted, directly or indirectly, its base and support ; the Arabians and the Phœnicians, then the most trading people recorded to us, took the lead ; Crete, Ægina, Lemnos, Orchomenos, and Thessalian Thebes, followed in commerce and art ; Athens, Ionia, Sicily, Corinth, and Sicyon, as well as Magna Græcia, enjoyed the

advantages of the one as well as the honours due to the other. When the commerce of Sidon, whose

" Artists taught the frame to shine,
Elaborate with artifice divine,"

ceased to enrich the Phœnician shores, the fine arts also took their flight to more favoured coasts; whilst the Ionian cities shared the benefits of trade with Athens, they surpassed its citizens in taste; but their commerce once withdrawn, the sister arts followed in its wake; and those who should have crowned with immortal beams their own parental coast, served to triple the fame of Minerva's favoured abode.* If such was the case in early history, what do we observe in modern Europe,—Pisa, Florence, and Venice, luxuriated in wealth and commerce. Rome is not an exception, for she derived more from the sale of benefices and indulgencies than the rival republics ever did from the productions of the loom, or the spices of the east. Let us reflect, at what period the arts ceased to flourish in northern and central Italy. America was discovered, and so was a new and more direct communication with India; the Reformation in England and other countries followed; and, in due time, the arts quitted the impoverished capitals of Italy for Spain and its dependencies, where they flourished until the destruction of the Spanish Armada, by our fleet, enabled the enfranchised Dutch to scour the seas in search of commerce; thence our admiration is diverted from Velasquez and Murillo to Terburgh, Potter, Rembrandt, and the whole tribe of Dutch painters, who would never have been heard of, had it not been for the enterprize and wealth of the Burgomasters. France also, under Henry IV. availed herself of the opportunity of establishing, on the ground-work of commerce, those arts, which, till then, were mere exotics in her palaces.

The above instances are doubtless sufficient to prove that commerce, not only is free from the charge of being incompatible with the fine arts; but the contrary is so manifest, that we can only wonder that so gross an error could long exist.

Second; the climate of Britain has long been the object of invective, as well amongst foreigners who never visited our shores, as also with our own countrymen, principally those who either know no other, or

* The Spartans alone, of all the Greeks, disputed not the superiority in art: they made, indeed, some attempts, about 700 years before Christ, when they commissioned Learchus, of Rhegium, to execute a large statue of Jupiter, in brass,—the first of the kind seen in Greece; they also employed their countryman, Gitides, who learned from Learchus; but without commerce the attempt was vain.

who, having visited the continent during two or three months at the finest season of the year, are most unfit to judge. Barry, whose knowledge equalled his eccentricity, has perhaps said enough to convince impartial Englishmen, that the charge is groundless; I should, therefore, pass it over unnoticed, had not a French author, of rare acuteness, renewed the attack.

Instead of citing Milton and Shakespeare, Hogarth, Reynolds, or Flaxman, ay, or even Martin or Turner, to prove that the climate has neither checked the aspirings of the mind, nor dimmed the visual beam, I shall again refer to history, and there perceive, that climate never was a bar to the arts.

In ancient times the genius of painting and sculpture spread her wings over a large extent of country, reflecting Apollo's rays along the coasts of Ionia and its islands, Phœnicia, Greece proper, Etruria, Magna Græcia, Sicily, Macedon, &c. It is manifest that all those tracts did not enjoy the same climate: though Ionia the most delicious of them all, produced the greatest number of eminent men, it is equally certain that when misery and oppression drove them to the commercial asylum of Athens, their genius lost none of its fervour: Phidias appeared pre-eminent whether at Athens or Ellis: Crete, Rhodes, or Corinth were equally favorable; nay Thebes itself, whose atmosphere was proverbially heavy and ungenial, produced Aristides, unrivalled for expression.

Modern art is, if possible, even more decisive; for while we acknowledge the delightful breezes that soften the sunny skies of Pisa or Florence, we notice that the healthy and still more fervid situation of Naples never rivalled pestilential Rome, or Venice wrapt in marshy exhalations: what indeed have the citron groves, the luscious vintage hills of Andalusia or Grenada produced to outshine the works of the shivering Flemander; lo! the torpid Dutch themselves, amidst fogs and ague have achieved enough to convince us that they want neither an eye to see, a mind to understand, nor a hand to impress the beauties of nature.

Third; We now proceed to the influence of religion, a most important subject of consideration; for it sometimes excites the artist to the noblest,—the most intellectual attempts: at others it depresses his energies by an intolerable weight of superstition and ignorance; and not unfrequently, it has prevented the practice altogether: religion not only might, but it ought to assist the fine arts, in their endeavours to commemorate the blessings of providence or the virtues of the citizen: but it is as fallacious to suppose that without the direct interference of

a priesthood, genius cannot stamp the canvass with its own impress, or animate the marble with its glow, as to ascribe the victories of our patriot bands—to the number of chaplains present, and not to the talent of the leader and discipline of the men. The Mahomedan fights bravely, but not the better for his religion.

The victors at the Olympic and other games were, among the Greeks, as often as their divinities, subjects for the artist; the same may be said of heroes and philosophers. Was not Pericles as fond of the arts as either Pope Julius the Second, or his successor? Again, the encouragement conferred on Leonardo da Vinci, by the Duke of Milan, was far greater than that which Michael Angelo received from Leo, and very different from the treatment that the unfortunate Correggio suffered from the Canons of Parma; * Sodorini, the chief magistrate of Florence, did as much to promote high art when he set Leonardo and Michael Angelo to decorate the council room of that republic, as Julius II. or any other pontiff in ordering such men to paint a chapel: nor must we forget that the same Julius, the most munificent of all the popes, delighted more in a helmet than a mitre, or even the Tiara. Still religion has done much and may again: though it may often have condemned the hand of genius to labour for the gratification of the bigot, as we may perceive by Mr. Uwins' excellent picture of the *Saint Manufactory*, it has also enriched the world with the Holy Families, by Raffaele, and frequently directed the mind to that which ought ever to be the aim of art—sentiment. Perhaps the greatest boon the arts ever received from religion consisted, however, in the moderate, the rational remuneration bestowed on those employed: the pictures were then intended for the admiration of the people, less for the personal vanity of the prelate: it was otherwise when men of genius became an appendage to princes; from that moment titles and extravagant pecuniary reward supplanted the keen sense of emulation and national admiration: in proof of this the Emperor Charles V., who sickened of empire, and died in a monastery, paid ten times more to Titian (besides the title of count,) for his own portrait than that great painter received for his Peter Martyr, which noble performance would rank

* When Titian visited the convent, the monks would have dissuaded him from noticing Correggio's performance as too contemptible.

Sculptors are as eager as painters to complain of the opposition of the Church of England to the fine arts; although sculptured monuments abound both in and around every country church. In St. Pauls—an opportunity offered, where the excitement of religious emotions combined with patriotic zeal; but with one or two exceptions, neither talent nor sentiment obeyed the call of sympathy and honour.

him equal to Michael Angelo, Leonardo and Raphael, if all his other productions were destroyed.

Fourth; we are next reminded that the people of England are hopelessly deficient in taste. It is rather strange that a nation so distinguished for poets of every class and shade, should be accused of want of taste. Are our gentry, whose little domains combine the charms of nature with the elegance of refinement, deficient in taste;—or the manufacturers, whose varied productions supersede most others in every market?—certainly not; but in the Fine Arts? In every clime there appears to have been a good taste and a bad: fortunately, where the natural course is not entirely impeded, (and it never can be for a very long period) the works of a bad taste are allowed to perish, whilst those of a purer mould are carefully preserved and submitted to our admiration. Little do we think, whilst gazing on the beauties of the Elgin frieze, that the bits and bridles of the horses were of bronze, probably gilt: we are even so accustomed to consider the Athenians as incapable of bad taste, that we positively believe the enormous statue of Minerva, executed by Phidias, for her temple at Athens, we entertain not a doubt that it was faultless,—and yet it was of gold and ivory. What should we say of an eminent sculptor, who were to insult our taste so far as to send a similar production to the exhibition at Somerset House?—It would not be admitted. Such was the taste of the time, it could not be that of Phidias. What are we to think of the Romans in the time of Pliny, who painted the finest Grecian statues black?—the Venus, the Gladiator, or the Apollo in most exquisite and simple marble, was to them intolerable; and, therefore, was the admirable working of the master-hand disguised and disfigured by a coat of paint, or a layer of gold. White eyes in a black head, at other times red or green marble drapery to a white face, are the remaining proofs of their depraved imaginings. In after times, when the people of Rome, or rather the Pontifical conclave, possessed not discernment enough to find out the merit of Michael Angelo's specimens, the want of taste was not deemed, nor did it prove an insuperable bar to the Arts. Leo the Tenth had no relish for the works of Leonardo da Vinci, nor did any take delight in the charms of Correggio: add to all this—that the monks of a church in the terra di Barri, caused the principal beauty of the building to be disfigured to satisfy—was it their taste?—no,—rather their ignorance: beautiful columns of Verd antique could no where else be seen, and in such keeping they were doomed to be useless; they positively caused them to be chipped, and covered with a coating of plaster; and all this in a country pre-eminent in taste. If this was the taste in Italy, we

need not inquire for it in Spain or Holland. France, in the days of Lesueur, Poussin, and Claude, had a claim;—but where was the taste that could endure the conceit and frippery that succeeded?

Fifth; our next difficulty is of a rather comical nature, and relates to the manners, features, and costume of our country.

Compared with the fine countenances of Grecian sculpture, or Italian pictures, we certainly observe a considerable deficiency in the common run of English faces; but such a comparison is unreasonable: it cannot be supposed that the vulgar or the ignorant amongst the Greeks possessed all the character and beauty depicted in those admirable performances; it would be to libel the artists, and lower them in our estimation from the historical to the portrait standard: we know that many of their greatest men were deficient in personal appearance, to wit, Pericles, Socrates, Alexander, Philopœmen, &c. If it be said that expression compensated, I must reply that the most frivolous of modern dandies are not more anxious to disguise encroaching age, or to smooth the inexpressive cheek, than were the luxurious Corinthians and Athenians. But it is enough that England has produced the most powerful actor, and the most impressive actress that fame records. If Garrick has proved how the artist's mind can supply the deficiencies of nature, making common form kindle with excess of sentiment;—if the Kemble mould is of English growth; or, if a Siddons combined elegance, dignity, and pathos beyond the hope of competition, let us hear no more of the unmeaning countenances or cold demeanour of our fellow citizens; for though we possess acuteness enough to trace the slight gradations of gesture and expression, the flash of passion from the eye, the avenging attitude of defiance, never assumed a more noble bearing than in an English patriot.

Shall we descend to the meaner subject—costume; there, indeed, unless the good sense of the amateur will permit us to use the same latitude that is taken in subjects of past history, we shall find some inconvenience: although the frock coat, or the winter cloak, the judge's robes, or prelate's gown; nay, the immense variety, according to rank and condition, from the privy counsellor's mantle to the ploughman's smock, afford abundant material for genius: nor were the ancients free from similar difficulties when they attempted subjects of their own time: with them, as with us, the defenders of the state, were all in uniform; every senator of consular rank wore the same toge, the similar stripe along its border, as all others of the class: besides, not only were persons of particular ages or stations denied the use of particular

colours; they were even confined to a certain fashion in their garb, a prescribed cut in their hair or beard.

They felt the ungenial shackles; and, therefore, represented most of their heroes naked. I may be allowed to observe that Barry, who had more of Grecian inspiration than perhaps any other modern, fell into the same awkward contrivance in representing the Death of General Wolfe. West, on the contrary, with less genius, yet dared to cope with the difficulty, and proved that the very worst portion of our costume is manageable in skilful hands,—all that we require is not to be limited to the fashion of the particular year, nor directed by the fondness for insipid portraiture. As regards the female costume among us—it is eminently beautiful—if properly taken, possessing elegance and simplicity, with endless variety in form and colour, and yet the perverted taste of many clings to the representation of the unnatural hoop and tobacco-pipe waist, high heels and powdered hair: little do those, who indulge in such extravagancies, think that their grand-children will with like folly admire the monstrous fashions they are now laying by in disgust,—the huge unsightly bonnet,—the sleeve that vies in dimensions with grandmamma's petticoat.

Sixth; having disposed of the preceeding points to the best of my power, I now proceed to the most important of all,

GOVERNMENT PATRONAGE.

“ All constraint,
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil: hurts the faculties, impedes
Their progress in the road to science, blinds
The eye-sight of discovery.” COWPER.

We have so often been told that without government patronage the Arts cannot thrive, that we are too apt to suppose it an incontrovertible axiom; though all analogy teaches us the very contrary. For more than a century and a half has the dangerous error been extending its shading branches over the world, in spite of the occasional hints of men of superior mind; even now it seems to spread a deeper shade, and cling with firmer root.

Mr. Wilkins, in a letter to Lord Goderich, published in the Library of the Fine Arts, of April, May, and June, 1832, observes in the first part, page 294, that,—“ When the author of the Civil History of

Rome, asserts, a liberal encouragement of the Arts and its professors to be the true policy of good government—this acknowledgment proceeding from such an author must satisfy the most rigid of economists, that public grants for scientific and learned purposes are expedient under all circumstances, even those of distress or embarrassment." Much as I am convinced that *liberal encouragement* is due to science, literature, and art, I am quite sure that public grants are not the safest way of encouraging, and that government patronage is the *bane* of those intellectual pursuits; and this I hope to prove from Mr. Wilkins's own account, as well as from more extensive information. To show that I am not singular in this view, I quote the following extract from the *Wealth of Nations*, chap. ii. ver. 4. In speaking of music and military exercises, the author states, that—"The masters do not seem to have been paid, or even appointed by the state, either in Rome, or even Athens." And in the next page, adds that,—"The schools of the Philosophers and Rhetoricians, not only were not supported by the public, but even that they were for a long time barely tolerated by it;" and also that,—"till about the time of Marcus Antoninus, no teacher appears to have had any salary from the public, or to have had any other emoluments than what arose from the fees of his scholars, that there was nothing equivalent to the privileges of graduation."

Having mentioned thus far, we will now follow Mr. W., who complains that, from the time of Charles the First to that of George the Third, there is almost a blank in the history of literature and science, so far as government patronage was concerned; but he, nevertheless, allows that the names of Milton, Wren, Barrow, Locke, Newton, *Kneller*, and Flamstead are recorded, and the observatory at Greenwich was founded. That those great men flourished without government patronage, would be pretty conclusive; but the errors in this part of the letter are so numerous and complicated, that I cannot hope to notice them all. We are not only informed that *Kneller*, Flamstead, Walpole, Swift, and Pope belonged to a period prior to the reign of William and Mary; we are likewise told that Steele and Addison were among the patricians in literature, who neither courted nor required the encouragement of government. Such mistakes are really unpardonable, since it would have been easy to ascertain that Pope was not born till the year of the Revolution, 1688; nor was it very difficult to discover that although poor Sir Richard could hardly make ends meet, royal or government patronage heaped upon him the revenues of Commissioner of the Stamp Office, Inspector of the Stables at Hampton Court, and Director of the Royal Company of Comedians, besides the

£500 that he received from George the First, for the dedication of the *Conscious Lovers*. Neither do we forget that Addison himself was enabled to travel by a government pension of £300 per annum, procured by Lord Somers. In his sweeping accusation of want of taste and patronage, Mr. W. even forgets the father of George the Third, and passes unnoticed the sinecure and pension of the Scotch bard Thomson, who, according to his own account, thought his affairs in a more poetical position without them. This case, as well as the more recent instance of Dr. Johnson, ought to convince us that what is called encouragement frequently proves an impediment. At all events, the following list will attest what sort of men could rise to eminence during the period between Charles the First, and George the Third; a lapse of time, according to Mr. Wilkins, to be deemed almost a blank in the history of literature and science, as regards government patronage. Milton, Barrow, Locke, Newton, Boyle, Sydenham, Halley,* Tillotson, Dryden, Mead, Berkeley, Pope, Wren, Smeaton, Fielding, Hume, Adam Smith, Cullen, Black, and Priestly, &c.—I pause with astonishment at the many that remain unmentioned; well might that excellent writer l'Abbé Millot, declare that they had taught his countrymen “*to think more powerfully, to liberate genius from its trammels, to enhance even frivolous subjects with useful truths.*” Such was the opinion of that able foreigner, without reference to government patronage.

But it is time to proceed to the period of public establishments, and as it has been the practice of every kingdom to copy those of Lewis the Fourteenth, Mr. Wilkins has, of course, passed a eulogium on that monarch. It is for us to see how far it is deserved.

We are told by Mr. W. that the first idea of a philosophical society in France is attributed to Mr. Mersenne, towards the commencement of the seventeenth century (more accurate information will enable us to say, in 1638); that it originated in conferences held at his apartments, by the mathematicians and naturalists of the day, amongst whom were reckoned, Gassendi, Descartes, Hobbes, Pascal, Blondel, and other celebrated persons. Instead of joining in the lamentation

* The following anecdote of Doctor Halley is too interesting, and too much to the purpose to be omitted:—Queen Caroline, visiting the Observatory at Greenwich, was so much pleased on learning, to her astonishment, that the doctor's salary for the arduous and important duties of Astronomer Royal, amounted to no more than one hundred guineas per annum, she declared her intention to request the king to increase it. The Doctor, however, entreated her to avoid doing so, lest the pecuniary reward might become an object of cupidity; in which case a man of influence and no philosopher would inevitably obtain the appointment.

of our author, that we may look in vain for the establishment in this country of institutions similar to those thus long established in France; (viz. the academies of science, literature, and arts, of Paris, and other French cities,) or before I examine the true character of that ambitious and fatal reign, I beg to ask whether the academy created a Descartes or a Pascal; if, on the contrary, those great men existed prior to the society, why did they found it? Did they meet for the purpose of instructing pupils? certainly not; but merely for friendly and intellectual conversation, as a few friends may in any country; nor could it ever have been the interest of genius to place itself under the guidance or dictation of a despot, who had the folly and indecency to introduce his mistress even into the council of the state.

The general character of Lewis is thus given by a popular author of the last century: "Ignorance and ambition were the only enemies of Lewis: through the former, he was blind to every patriotic duty of a king, and promoted the interests of his subjects, only that they might the better answer the purposes of his greatness; by the latter, he embroiled himself with all his neighbours, and wantonly rendered Germany a dismal scene of devastation. By his impolitic and unjust revocation of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, he obliged the protestants to take shelter in England, Holland, and different parts of Germany, where they established the silk manufactures, to the great prejudice of their own country. He was so blinded by flattery that he arrogated to himself the divine honours paid to the pagan emperors of Rome. His reign, from the year 1702 to 1711, was one continued series of defeats and calamities. Just as he was reduced, old as he was, to the desperate resolution of collecting his people, and dying at their head, he was saved by the English Tory ministry deserting the cause, withdrawing from their allies, and concluding the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713."

Such was Lewis XIV. divested of that hired flattery which represented him as a transcendent Augustus. If the baseness of talented slaves has misrepresented a tyrant, of whom it has been justly said, that "he wasted the treasure, shed the blood, and destroyed the happiness of his people;" we need also examine closely the conduct of the minister who directed the disgusting patronage. I will, therefore, not hesitate to ask, what was Colbert? This individual, who has been often cited as a pattern for all future ministers, rose from the station of a banker's clerk to be a confidential agent of Cardinal Mazarin, who, at his death, recommended him to the king, who ap-

pointed him successively to the high offices of intendant of the finances, in 1661; superintendant of the buildings, in 1664; secretary of state, with the management of maritime concerns, in 1669; and, in 1672, he was made minister of state; "for," it is observed, "how busied soever he was in the regulation of public affairs, yet he never neglected his own family's interest and grandeur, or missed any opportunity of advancing either. He had six sons and three daughters, all of whom he took care to marry to great persons; for, though he had no reason to doubt his master's favour, yet he wisely secured his fortune by powerful alliances." His biographers add, that, "though naturally sour and morose, he knew how to act the lover, and had mistresses." If this was the minister who "was free from the vices of the courtiers," let us, if possible, discover what made him useful to the cardinal. Is it to be believed, that among the praises bestowed on him, we are told that "it was by his counsel that Mazarin obliged the governors of frontier places to maintain their forces by the contributions they exacted;" and "that he was entrusted by that minister with the management of that gainful trade of selling benefices and governments!" So that he first sold the governments, and then gave the governors a pretext for cruelty and extortion, by forcing many of them to maintain their forces by the contributions they exacted.

Of all the institutions or great works of Lewis XIV, none are more vaunted than the creation of the academy of arts, with its dependent school at Rome; the construction of palaces, particularly that of Versailles, with its gardens; the establishment of the observatory of Paris, and of the manufacture of tapestry at the Gobelins; and—above all, the great canal of Languedoc, in order to connect the Mediterranean and the ocean, so as to afford a speedy and safe passage through an important part of France. Of the academy I shall have to speak by and bye; and therefore proceed to the palaces, on which so large an amount was lavished, that even Colbert, with all the contrivances and contributions that he could command, found it impossible to keep pace with the mania; but Versailles, with its gardens and its orangery, its paintings, gilding, and its water works, is the pride of that age of splendour and profusion. A wild imagination can there indulge in all the rhapsody of mental inebriety; but good taste had little to do with its formation, any more than judgment; the façade, on the garden side, though not possessed of Grecian elegance and simplicity, has, indeed, a considerable share of grandeur and beauty; but all beside is incongruous, and devoid of good sense. Whilst the principle front of

the edifice is composed of various ill assorted masses, in strange confusion,* the gardens are laid out by the rule and compass, far more like a twelfth-day cake than any thing in nature; but the excess of folly is to be found in the designs for the water works; the limpid splendour whereof may dazzle the sight, as the splash of their countless crystal streams diverts the ear. You imagine that all the water fairies of romance are contending with the naiads of Grecian mythology; instead of which, Apollo (not Phaeton, as common sense might indicate), on his annual car, surrounded by his heavenly attendants, on horse or foot, is wading through the roaring waters. Ridiculous as this is, it is scarcely more opposed to common sense than the choice of the site of this palace of wonders and folly. With some, the ne plus ultra of inconsistency is itself a merit, and therefore do they admire the vast *genius* that could think of building a palace, and constructing these water works at a distance of some miles from the river that supplies them; the result is, that, from the immense expense of the concern, they can only afford the prince or the public the enjoyment of these luxuries two or three times a year. The Gobelins manufactory is nearly as unwise, for its expense is so greatly out of all proportion to the value of its produce, that, instead of its tapestries being sent into the proper markets, and adding to the wealth of the state, they are merely the gorgeous produce of dull and slavish labour, intended as presents to foreign princes. In that manufactory a favourite historical painting is frequently, for eight or ten years, rolled up from public admiration, whilst wretched workmen, at eight-pence or a shilling a day, copy in worsted that which their plodding drudgery can never equal; but the vanity of the monarch is tickled, and gazing multitudes applaud. The Languedoc canal was a work of great national importance, and, under proper guidance, would have done for France what the Bridgewater, or Grand Junction canals have done in England, or the Caledonian for Scotland, where they spread industry, comfort, and civilization through the enriched provinces; but that of Lewis XIV, though it cost the immense sum of £900,000 sterling, partly out of the *funds of the province*, was, as a personal favour granted to the engineer, Riquet, as a perpetual and hereditary property: however, the folly and injustice of the act were of no importance; for notwithstanding all that Colbert is said to have done for commerce, it has become useless and out of repair.

* It must be recollected, that the old chateau of Louis XIII, having been incorporated with Louis XIV.'s more splendid pile, remains, forming, as the writer justly observes, a very confused mass. Ed.

It will be asked how a sovereign like Lewis XIV. and a minister like Colbert, as here described, could for more than a century, have claimed the admiration of the world. The reasons are obvious; the wretched system they adopted, though wrecked, is not yet abandoned: Monopolies and bounties, with their attendant consequences, affectation, extravagance, and adulation, are still preferred to honorable competition and noble confidence. Lewis is still admired as the founder of institutions, however useless or even noxious, as the subsidiser and dictator of talent; as the builder of ostentatious palaces, though at the expense of a starving nation, and even as a conqueror; whilst Henry IV., the founder of all the power of France, of the sum of wealth and industry it possessed at the commencement of the reign of Lewis XIV. is stigmatized as a king with little knowledge, and still less desire to encourage it in others; because he refused to keep in golden chains Scaliger* and a few other writers; but I will ask the admirers of the pseudo Augustus, whether I am not correct in stating that the manufactures, the commerce, the talent of that mighty empire rose to their summit from the Edict of Nantes, one of the noble deeds of Henry; that from the period when the Protestants were enrolled amongst the citizens of the land, unto the fatal moment of its revocation in 1685, neither the tyranny of princes, nor the factions of powerful individuals, nor even the trammels imposed on trade by the formation of companies† could entirely repress the glorious effects of *religious toleration*, but when bigotry set its seal to the unfeeling cruelties of Lewis—when Protestantism was driven from their frontiers, the force of the state withered, its means shrivelled, and at the end of what is called

* This author was so partial to the system of government patronage, that being refused a pension by Henry IV. he went to Holland, where he obtained one.

† The following must convince us that the French merchants at that period understood the real interest of trade. Soon after Mr. Colbert came into the management of the finances, he sent for the principal merchants, and to ingratiate himself with them, asked what he could do for them: they unanimously replied, "leave us to ourselves, (*laissez nous faire*)."

We also learn, on the authority of Mr. D'Argenson, that a person unknown to Mr. Colbert, having obtained an audience, advised him to encourage the trade and manufactures of his own country, which was large enough to supply itself and all Europe with what they wanted, and to give up the French Colonies in the East and West Indies, to the English and the Dutch, who had very little territory of their own. Colbert did not deign to make any reply; but turned his extraordinary counsellor out of the room. Little traits of this kind may enable us to judge of the liberal views of commercial men in those days; the result of his arrogance and narrow system ought to open our eyes to the consequences of the restrictive policy. How unfortunate that the enlightened Adam Smith was unacquainted with these anecdotes.

a glorious reign, it tottered on the brink of dissolution and bankruptcy ! The facts are too obvious to require comment : it is enough to consider that among the miseries resulting from the misdeeds of that reign ; the silk looms of Lyons decreased from eighteen thousand to four thousand. It is indeed usual for flattery to set off against that loss—the introduction of the broad cloth manufacture from Flanders ; but even that apology is unfounded : that manufacture having been brought in by Cardinal de Richelieu, when in 1643 he treacherously deprived the Duc de Bouillon of Sedan : but to look at the beautiful side of the picture, let us recollect that Coligni, Henry IV., and Sully, were Protestants ; that under liberal arrangements, whilst superstition was mitigated and toleration established,—commerce, science, literature, and particularly the fine arts, flourished greatly. In proof of this statement I must submit the following list of great men, all born before Lewis assumed the reins of Government. The number annexed indicates the age of each at that period.

Condé	36	P. Corneille	51
Turenne	46	Molière*	37
Vauban	24	Boileau	21
Descartes died 1650, at . .	50	Montaigne died 1592 . . .	
Pascal	34	La Fontaine	36
De Mersenne died 1648, at	50	Racine	16

This is too remarkable to need any comment, and yet what follows is still more contrary to the received opinion ; for it proves that nearly all the eminent artists of France were launched into the career of fame, at the time of Protestant industry, and prior to the period of Government Patronage, which appears to be capable of producing a Racine ; but never a Corneille, and still less a Milton or a Shakspeare : whose magical power is to tame the manly philosophy of a Pope into the trim doctrine of a Boileau.

The following are the principal artists who lived at or before the above mentioned period, with their age at that time.

Le Sueur died 1655, at . .	38	Lebrun	38
Valentin died 1632, at . .	32	Jouvenet	13
Vouet died 1648, at . . .	66	Du Fresnoy	46
Poussin	64	Claude Lorraine	57

* Lewis' patronage of Molière, certainly redounds to his credit. When the court minions slighted him and valets deemed him no company for them, Lewis sat at table with him.—ED.

Mignard	47	Lenain died 1648	
Coyzel	29	La Hyre died 1656, at . . .	50

JEAN GOUGON,* the most celebrated of French sculptors, being a protestant, was killed the day of the St. Barthelemie, when working at the Louvre.

From this we are forced to acknowledge that from the commencement of Lewis' and Colbert's system of protection and patronage, to the breaking up of so many institutions at the close of the eighteenth century, that is, during a period of nearly one hundred and forty years, France with her boasted academies produced nothing to compare with the blaze of intellect that haloed the decline of de Richelieu's latter days, or tinged with brilliant hope the dawn of the young king's reign. Where indeed can we seek in after time, a Turenne, a Descartes, a Corneille, or a Molière,† and if under the boasted system of Colbert we look in vain for their equals, hopeless indeed would it be to inquire for a Poussin, a Lesueur, or a Claude: and yet absolute power exercised all the approved means of Government Patronage, supported by that religion, without whose aid we are told, the arts can never flourish; for the energy of the Protestants being at length over matched by the unrelenting foe, Catholicism reigned triumphant: but all the efforts of costly establishments, regal pomp and influence, or even the excitement of superstition could not revive the mental superiority of a better age when man depended on his own industry and not adulation, on the prosperity of his fellow men and not on public institutions; an age less glaring, but comparatively more free; if happiness, progressive happiness, deserve the blessings of a nation, surely no king has an equal claim on the admiration of the French as Henry IV. and his noble minister Sully; but Lewis and Colbert—what is their portion?

To be continued.

* Lewis assumed the reigns of government at eighteen, in 1657; the academy was indeed chartered in 1655, but not pensioned till 1663.

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes occurred, be it remembered, in 1685.

† If Racine had lived a few years earlier, so as to escape the contagion of a vain and affected court, he might have equalled Corneille; but it could not be expected under a sovereign who appointed him and Boileau his historiographers, in despite of common sense, but in perfect accordance with misunderstood patronage. He died of grief at having displeased his master by a memorial of the miseries of the people in 1698, undertaken at the suggestion of Madame de Maintenon, who had not courage enough to protect him from the royal anger. A sad result of power in the prince and of meanness in the poet; but a valuable lesson for posterity.

ON THE UTILITY AND ADVANTAGES OF PERSPECTIVE.

"Every opportunity should be taken to discountenance that false and vulgar opinion, that rules are the fetters of genius: they are fetters only to men of no genius."

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, First Discourse.

"The first business of the student is to be able to give a true representation of whatever object presents itself,* just as it appears to the eye, so as to amount to a deception; and the geometrick rules of perspective are included in this study."

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, Note 52, on the Art of Painting.

IN attempting to elucidate the above passages, some apology might be thought necessary, to banish all appearance of presumption; as it would seem to imply, that artists, in general, have experienced a comparative failure, or have only met with a partial success, in that elementary branch of the fine arts, which may be termed "the theory of drawing;" but till that fortunate and lively acquisition to the arts of design becomes more generally studied by painters, it is hoped that an enthusiastic admirer of correct drawing will be forgiven, if he endeavour to add but a single ray to the brilliant ideas of those artists who expect to shine in these golden days of poetic imagination.

I trust it will not be considered essential to give force to my arguments, by quoting the opinions of various eminent artists, who have written in favour of this study; the above extracts from the writings of the distinguished president are alone sufficient to show how important he considered it: if further evidence is required, the student cannot do better than read Sir Joshua's twentieth note on the Art of Painting.

From my own experience, the result of very considerable attention to the study of perspective, as well as from the conversations I have had with many artists of celebrity, I am confirmed in my opinion, that perspective is not only useful, but absolutely requisite in the education of an artist, to enable him to practise with facility and certainty those unerring rules and first principles, which, however unperceived, must

* We must take the words, "whatever object presents itself," in the more extensive sense of whatever objects present themselves to the inventive mind or imagination, of the artist, just as they would appear to his eye if they were really before him.

enter into the very essence of every design that is intended to appear natural.

Molière, in one of his comedies, has cleverly described the astonishment of an uneducated opulent man, at being told that he had been speaking prose during his life ; and many artists will be equally surprised to hear it asserted, that whenever their works appear true to nature, they are indebted to perspective, and that the outlines of all their performances should be perfectly correct perspective drawings : for no lines whatever can decidedly represent the artist's intentions, unless they be perspectively true ; and every object that can be defined by outlines, may be unequivocally represented by the strictest rules of linear perspective.

It is, therefore, much to be lamented, that the theory of drawing is in general so little understood or attended to, even (I am sorry to say it) by many of those who are at the head of their profession. I am aware that these sentiments will not yet be sufficiently believed to procure them general favour ; a long habit of considering a thing not wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right ; and a formidable outcry, in defence of established custom, is sure to be raised against assailing or altering generally received opinions ; but this is no excuse whatever for a student's remaining in ignorance of that branch of the arts which springs from truth, and surely truth needs not the support of authority or precedent ; yet it is too often the case, that artists erect into precedents the very defects of great men ; and, for want of knowing better, plead high authority, for the sake of sinning in good company : at the same time, contentedly doing wrong, or even worse, they choose to remain in ignorance and uncertainty, rather than take the necessary pains to acquire that knowledge, which, if once understood, they would deem invaluable ; there are others again, who consider perspective as a mere appendage to the art of drawing, and which may very well be dispensed with ; instead of regarding it as the first thing in which the student, who would be a candidate for fame, should be well grounded.

An artist, without any idea of the theory of drawing, may, by long practice and diligent observation, sketch whatever he sees in nature, very accurately, especially where the different effects of light and shade offer themselves to his view, and prompt the track of his pencil : although he who possesses a good knowledge of perspective, will undoubtedly sketch with much greater facility, as well as with greater truth ; but, in the composition of an original design, it is quite impossible for any one to draw what he intends to represent, without

being liable to commit great absurdities, if he is not tolerably well acquainted with perspective.*

Before I proceed, it may be right to observe, that I have no idea of teaching any of the rules of perspective in this communication; all I hope to be able to do, is to point out the absolute necessity and utility of the study; to convince all those who are unacquainted with its principles, that it is of more importance to an artist than is generally believed; it is to drawing what grammar is to literature or language; being also the pilot of the pencil, and the key which opens to a mighty and infinite arena, where the ideas begin immediately to expand, and where the grandest and most extensive imaginings are brought to view, which otherwise must remain for ever involved in impenetrable obscurity.

The actual dimension of objects can never be seen as they really exist in nature; and the appearance of every thing varies according to the change of the situation whence the object is viewed; by which, sometimes, length is contracted into a point, and breadth into a line.—

“ Taught by rule, each figure finds its place,
And miles seem measured in an inch of space.”

Elements of Art, by SIR M. A. SHEE.

By what I have here advanced, perhaps some will suppose that perspective is only of use in representing spacious and elaborate views; but this is not the case, for the science is equally applicable to every existing object, whether it be a nutshell or the city of Babylon: the artist who strictly adheres to the rules of perspective, may represent his ideas of the one or the other with certainty, for the rules of perspective authorize no random sketches, depending on the hand and eye, but present a certain and infallible method of proceeding, whereby every line may be drawn on the picture with the utmost exactness; and moreover, it matters not whether the objects to be represented are actually in existence before him, or are to be the production of his fertile imagination. As a proof of what I have stated, it is only necessary to mention Mr. Martin, whose works are replete with grandeur, novelty, and sublimity; had he not possessed a thorough knowledge of perspective, all those lofty conceptions of his mind must have been buried in the gloom of ignorance, known only to himself,

* The absurdities delineated by Hogarth, in his frontispiece to Kerby's *Perspective*, quarto edition, are too obvious to need any comment; a child, who had rarely handled a pencil, would scarcely commit such errors.

without the possibility of transferring them to the canvass. The outlines of his landscapes are highly deserving the attention of artists, every object in them appears to be decidedly in the place intended, and of a proper size, in proportion to the distance or situation of the surrounding scenery; if he introduces water in his pictures, it always appears perfectly level, and every thing reflected from its smooth surface, proves the advantage to be derived from a knowledge of this science. I allude to these particulars as excellencies, which are not to be met with in many pictures that are highly meritorious in other respects, although with some of the greatest improprieties in the outline, such as figures and animals completely off the ground which they were intended to stand upon, besides numerous other imperfections that may not be noticed by a common observer; nevertheless, were they to be correctly drawn, no one would hesitate for a moment to say which appeared to be the most natural.

I am quite certain that many artists feel inclined to devote a portion of their time to the study of perspective, but are entirely discouraged in the first attempt, either by hearing a lecturer, who may thoroughly understand the subject himself, although incapable of explaining it to others, and who offers, as illustrations, a series of observations that do not tend to elucidate the subject, but rather to throw a gloom over the whole science; or are terrified at the sight of books, full of elaborate plates, in which the lines of the problems cross each other in such torturing variety, that to a novice, they must appear rather like cobwebs than explanations; there are two or three books of this description, which, notwithstanding what I have said, are extremely clever, though perhaps better calculated for the lover of mathematics, than for the immediate use of an artist;* except these few, nearly all the works on this subject, which have come within my notice, are deficient in explaining the first principles, or the foundation upon which both theory and practice are built: if this is not well understood, the science must for ever appear dry, complex, and abstruse.

As I consider the student's advancement in perspective, to depend entirely on his clearly understanding the rudiments, perhaps it will not be irrelevant if I endeavour to explain what it really is. To do this, we must first allow, that if a picture were painted in the utmost degree of perfection, and placed in a proper position, a spectator would not be able to distinguish whether the original objects were actually before him, or only the representation of those objects on a flat surface. I

* Thomas Malton's Perspective, Hamilton's Perspective, &c.

imagine every one will agree, that the first step towards perfection in painting, is to obtain a correct outline; and no drawing whatever can perfectly resemble nature without being perspectively true; by what means that truth is acquired, is immaterial. We will now suppose that the objects to be represented are beyond, or on the other side of the picture;* that is, having determined on the station, from which you intend the view to be taken, imagine a transparent plane, placed between the spectator's eye and the objects, through which you can distinctly see them on the other side; it must be evident to all who give it a moment's consideration, that, if the eye be so confined as not to move from a certain point, and with a steady hand, every line be accurately traced as it appears on the transparent plane, such a delineation will perfectly resemble nature, and must be correctly in perspective. The transparent plane may then be considered as the picture, and the view may very justly be said to be taken from nature: now, to perform such a delineation by geometrical rules, instead of the transparent plane, is nothing more than what is properly called "Linear Perspective."

This part of the subject is of considerable importance, therefore, I wish it to be well understood that the picture is considered as a section of the Cone or Pyramid of visual rays, by a plane in any position whatever; that is, if threads or straight lines were drawn from all the principal parts of an object to the spectator's eye, they would resemble the visual rays, which in nature are imaginary; if this cone of visual rays be intersected by a plain surface, that intersection will produce the perspective representation of the object viewed by the spectator; it will likewise be so perfect, that all the lines will exactly coincide with the original object, provided it be placed at the proportionate height and distance; and a drawing so produced, will be precisely similar to the one traced upon the glass. It is manifest that while the eye remains stationary in that point, the object cannot vary in its appearance; but it is also obvious, that every section of the Pyramid of rays, by a plane in different positions, will exhibit a different picture; indeed, they may be so very unlike, that a common observer would scarcely believe them to be representations of the same object, much less from the same point of view and position: yet so long as the eye remains in the true point of view, the effect of all these pictures will be alike, and every one will perfectly resemble the original object; nevertheless, some of them will be very extravagant representations, owing to an improper

* In perspective delineations, the objects are *sometimes* considered to be before the picture.

choice of the position of the picture, but none of them will be unnatural.

Perhaps circumstances of this kind have given rise to the objections which some persons make against perspective, that it is not to be depended upon, or that it is necessary sometimes to deviate from its rules to produce an agreeable effect. This is a mistaken notion, for the rules of perspective, as well as all other rules, may be injudiciously applied; but if the point, whence the view is taken, be nearly opposite to the middle of the picture, and so far distant from it, that the entire picture is seen within an angle of 40 or 50 degrees, its principles can never be too scrupulously observed; to depart from them in any case, is to violate natural propriety, and to sacrifice to a capricious idea of taste the certainty of truth and science; for the Art itself supplies us with an infallible mode of ascertaining and representing all kinds of objects, so that from a particular point of view, they certainly must appear like nature.

Another circumstance that frequently occurs in drawing, and which appears to some an almost insurmountable difficulty, while others consider it a defect in perspective, is, that when we stand opposite the middle, and near a long range of buildings in a straight line, the horizontal lines above our eyes seem to decline towards either end, yet make no angle; therefore, they imagine that the representations of those lines should be, in such case, curved. Now this rule may be recollected as an invariable one,—that accurate representations of every original right line should also, on the picture, be a right line, provided it is on a plain surface, (paintings on domes, or other curves, are exceptions to this rule); the truth of which any person may soon perceive, if they will take the trouble to look through a window into a street, where there is a long range of houses on the opposite side, and which are parallel to the glass, the line along the top of the houses will evidently appear to decline towards both ends of the street, although the bars, which are in a straight line from one side of the window to the other, for the purpose of separating the squares of glass, perfectly correspond with the upper line of the houses; consequently, parallel straight lines on the picture must truly represent straight lines in nature that are parallel to the picture, and they will appear to decline both ways, the same as the original lines, because the sides of the picture are farther from the eye, and consequently are seen within a less angle than the same space would be in the middle of the picture. Suppose it were required to represent a very high tower, whose sides were perfectly upright: hence its lines would be

parallel to the picture ; I think no artist would hesitate for a moment about drawing its lines on the picture perfectly upright and parallel to each other ; yet, if it were correct to represent the top of the long range of houses declining towards the sides of the picture, it would also be equally correct to represent high parallel towers diminishing upwards ; an absurdity which no artist would think of doing.

The chief cause of artists entertaining erroneous notions of perspective, is their not rightly comprehending the difference between the representation of an object on a plain surface, and its real appearance in nature ; two distinct things, which can never be united in a picture ; the first, I hope, is satisfactorily explained, to be a section of the pyramid of rays by a plane ; but the appearance of an object can only be represented on a section of the pyramid of rays, by the concave surface of a sphere, with the eye or point of view precisely in the centre ; in which case, it will be found, and then only, that every distinct part of the drawing will bear the same proportion to other parts, and to the entire representation that the objects appear to have, when seen in nature ; panoramic pictures are painted on the internal surface of a cylinder, with the point of view in the centre ; consequently, all the representations of the widths of objects bear the same proportional dimensions to each other on the picture, as the originals appear to have in nature, owing to every part of the circumference being equally distant from the spot whence the view was taken.

The objections which are raised against perspective, or the imperfections which are generally attributed to it, arise entirely from ignorance or inadvertency ; for the science in itself is as perfect as positive proof can make it ; in fact, I cannot believe that it is possible to make the slightest improvement in it. It is but justice to the memory of our countryman, Dr. Brook Taylor, to state, that we are indebted to him for having extricated the subject, which he found involved, as it were, in mystery and uncertainty ; and, although the little volumes which he published on the science, more than a hundred years ago, have been explained, enlarged upon, and published in a thousand different ways, yet still I believe I may truly say that no improvement has been made in the science.

Artists who have never studied perspective, generally imagine it to be founded upon an almost incomprehensible theory, and look upon it as a most laborious undertaking ; whereas it is extremely simple, and the general principles, upon which the science is founded, may very readily be comprehended. If I were to give an opinion about the time

it would require, for an artist of moderate capacity, to attain sufficient knowledge of perspective, for the purpose of designing any kind of pictures, I should say, that, with determination, and close attention to the subject, every day, for a month or six weeks, he would be enabled to become so far master of the science, as never to be at a loss how to delineate every object likely to occur in painting. I do not mean to infer that any one could be perfect in so short a period of time, as there are many objects formed mathematically, which would require the most intense or abstruse study to delineate, and when done, would be more curious than really useful.

It cannot be expected, nor even is it necessary, that an artist should apply the rules of perspective whenever an opportunity offers; but it is indispensable that he should know how to apply them on every occasion that necessity may require; by which means, after having obtained a very few of the principal lines and points, the rest might be drawn in by an experienced hand and eye, so accurately, that it would be almost impossible for any one to point out the most trifling error.

To be concluded in the next number.

ON THE STUDY OF LANDSCAPE FROM NATURE.

BY ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS. ADDRESSED TO YOUTH. NO. I.

THE art of painting in water-colours, as practised by our native artists, may not only be included amongst the most useful and most elegant of modern inventions, but the discovery be justly ascribed to the professors of the British school.

It is equally due to the fair of our island to admit that the excellence which this art has attained is in no small degree to be attributed to their good taste; for the study of drawing having become in the higher circles of life scarcely less indispensable than music, as one of the accomplishments in female education, the professors of water-colour

art, particularly in the landscape department, owed almost entirely for many years their professional practice to teaching; hence it may be said that music and painting, in Great Britain, obtained their general influence upon society under the auspices of the fair.

The great grandmothers of the rising beauties of the present generation, who owed the perpetuation of their beauty to the recording pencil of Reynolds, were those who first cultivated this delightful art. It was about this period, indeed, that the prejudice which almost generally prevailed against the enlightening of the female mind, gave way to a consideration of the natural rights of the sex, when a more enlarged and becoming mode of education being adopted, the advantages have proved reciprocal; for the cultivation of the female mind has happily operated upon the minds of the "lordly sex," and imperceptibly wrought that reformation of manners which has raised the intellectual character of the present, so obviously superior to that of the last or any former age.

In the cultivation of music from the early part of the last century, the young ladies obtained able instructors, almost all the celebrated composers taught the art. It was not so with drawing, for there were no professors capable of teaching, not one master could be found, who, comparatively speaking, knew enough of the art to be worthy the designation "artist."

At the period of which we speak, the only professor of landscape painting was *George Lambert*, who designed the scenery for the stage of Lincoln's-Inn theatre. *Taverner*, his contemporary, was an amateur painter; but neither of these being professional teachers, the rising generation could obtain no advantage from their instruction, other than the favoured few, the daughters of certain high families, who patronized the one and admired the works of the other. Neither of these landscape painters, however esteemed in their day, had any claim to rank with the painters truly deserving the designation of masters; for their best works were mere *pasticci* compositions, principally made up of plagiarisms from the engravings after the works of the Poussins, Berghem, Salvator Rosa, or Claude de Lorraine, and coloured according to their recollection of the few original pictures which they had seen of the works of these renowned painters, rather than from any observation which they had collected from the study of nature. Indeed it was not until Wilson and Gainsborough appeared, that any British landscape painter had evinced sufficient sagacity, to say nothing of good taste, to urge him to seek the principles of art in the school of nature.

Presuming that to the intelligent spirit which prevails amongst those to whom this is addressed, it may be acceptable to know somewhat of the history of the art of painting in water-colours, we shall briefly describe its origin and progress in this country, and particularly as it relates to teaching, with observations upon the processes or styles which each master used as a means for conveying instruction.

It should be observed that in drawing, as in music, many of the most fashionable teachers were foreigners; in the graphic art, indeed, scarcely a native artist was employed, partly from a modest reluctance prevailing amongst them to act as teachers, and partly, as has been asserted, from an honest conscientiousness that they were not qualified to teach, particularly as it was only in the families of the highest order that their professional services were required. Foreigners, however, were not so nice touching these punctilios, and a decided predilection existing in their favor, certain Italians, Frenchmen and others, who could not obtain a living by the practice of their art in their own countries, contrived to acquire a genteel competency by teaching the little they knew in this, being encouraged by the coteries of fashion.

Pillement, Goupy, and Chatelain, were renowned in their day, as teachers of landscape. The Italians were principally employed in teaching their pupils to draw noses, eyes, lips, and ears, then the bust, and subsequently the whole human figure, and strange specimens of humanity frequently proceeded from their disciples; not much inferior however, to the scrawls of black chalk and bistre, which passed for castles, rocks, mountains, woods, and waterfalls; the handy works of the "drawers" of landscape. Graphic art, as then practised, may be considered only as a few steps in taste, obtained by the granddaughters beyond their grandmamma's, famed for working landscape in sampler-stitch, and historical pieces in embroidery.

Pillement's landscapes, once all the rage, are now amusing to behold. They may be considered the veritable beau-ideal of the landscape regions of the shepherds and shepherdesses of the French-opera. He taught from his fantastic designs, to draw with the pencil, with black chalk, or with the pen. The shadows were laid on with washes of Indian-ink enriched with bistre, with a tint of bluish black for the distant mountains and the still more distant sky. Almost all the young ladies of fashion were diligently occupied six hours of the morning at the harpsicord in exercising their vocal powers in the strains of Farinelli, Handel, or Bononcini; or converting blank paper into pretty pastorals à la *Pillement, Chatelain, or Goupy*. These

pursuits led at least to a love of art, however erroneously directed ; and as subsequent artists improved in knowledge and taste, so, proportionably did their pupils. It is amusing at least, if not instructive to indulge in the retrospective view of the mental pursuits of the ladies of the patrician class, who lived a hundred years ago.

Goupy was a grade superior in art above *Pillement*, for he copied from the pictures of the old masters, and executed in body water-colours with a tasteful touch, and a freedom that was not wanting in mastery. It was in the use of transparent colours, that he in common with all his predecessors and contemporaries was most deficient ; neither he nor they could accomplish a design without the whole being rendered by a harsh outline ; hence, none of the effects, even had the subjects been unexceptionable, could possibly assume the air of nature.

Chatelain, though but a very indifferent artist, yet possessed somewhat more of what is felt by the term picturesque than the others his compeers. In his designs, although not compatible with the present just notions of composition, there is an air of rurality, the passages reminding the spectator of the enclosures of the low countries of Holland and Flanders ; recollections, however, rather than characteristic of real scenes. These he wrought in black chalk, which washed with bistre and indian-ink, were enriched by hatching again with chalk, producing a granulated texture, which, though specious enough, was pleasing to the eye.

The lessons or examples prepared by this artist for his pupils owed their resemblance to real scenes, from the circumstance of his having obtained a certain degree of improvement by a series of topographical sketches which he made of the old churches and other rural and picturesque objects, which yet remained in his day amongst the villages in the immediate vicinity of London and Westminster, whose sites are now become part and parcel of our vast metropolis. These views which he etched, form a collection in a small volume,—one of great interest to the curious in topography, as therein is preserved the pictorial representation of several local scenes agreeably associated with the memory of the days that are gone.

Chatelain occasionally drew his landscape scenery upon coloured paper, of a greyish brown, and sometimes a blue grey tint, these he also shadowed with black chalk, and added the broad effect with washes of black, warmed towards the foreground with tints of brown, heightening the lights with white.

It was upon this practice of *Chatelain* that *Gainsborough* established his superior style of picturesque sketching, which he practised

with such magical feeling, that the eye of taste is captivated on beholding them, and connoisseurship is compelled to exclaim "Nature created him her painter."

Amongst the native landscape painters of the last age who contributed by their drawings to the advancement of topographical study, the name of *Marlowe* must not be forgotten. He sketched numerous views of well known sites in and about the metropolis, with an ease and a mastery, which though not remarkable for accuracy, were admired by the initiated for their artist-like feeling. Some of these, suitably framed adorn the walls of the committee-room at the Foundling Hospital, and form a part of the collection of works of the British artists there; which in the reign of King George the Second, attracted all the beaux and belles, from the court end of the town, and was for several years the most splendid rendezvous of fashion, of any place in the kingdom.*

This circumstance again affords an instance of the beneficial influence which the arts derived from the countenance of the fair, for their attractions led the gentlemen to patronize the exhibition there.

Having thus traced the progress of drawing in water-colours from the early part of the last century to about the year 1760, the period of the accession of George the Third, under whose long reign the art of painting in this material attained to a sort of second epoch in the practice of Paul and Thomas Sandby, which proceeded auspiciously to the third period, when Girtin, Turner, and Westall appeared, whose united powers opened the way to that improvement which has raised the Art to that perfection, which, as practised in England, is the admiration of all the civilized world.

Paul Sandby was the first who studied topographical drawing effectively; for, before his time, all the graphic delineations that had been made, whether of towns, cathedrals, castles, royal palaces, or noble seats, were either represented as birds-eye views, or in such false perspective, as not only was at variance with general truth, but as remote as Art could be from pictorial taste.

Paul Sandby had studied perspective sedulously, and having an ardent love for Art, he travelled to various parts of the kingdom in search of the picturesque. When he had discovered a scene that he

* The pictures and other works of Art given to this benevolent institution by the artists of the day, formed so attractive an exhibition, that thousands flocked thither daily, who, paying for admittance, added considerably to the funds. It was in consequence of this fortuitous success that the British artists opened their annual national exhibition.

thought would compose together sufficiently well to form a picture, he chose the most fitting station, and therefrom set about its delineation with that careful examination of its general and individual characteristics, which, properly attended to, conveys a resemblance of the scene represented, with that intelligence, which even in outline delights those who have a feeling for the charm of topographical study. To this ingenious artist then, indisputably, is due the honor usually ascribed to him for his mode of delineation, namely, that of being the founder of the topographical style of drawing.

This material advance in the true mode of studying scenes from nature, namely, the power of delineating with scientific truth the general and individual forms of a regular architectural structure and all its accessories with pictorial character, depended upon his knowledge of linear perspective, which, directed by his natural perception, found the path by which the rising artist might henceforth behold the true charm of the graphic picturesque. To this intelligence, as applied by Paul Sandby, may easily be traced the first rudiments of that topographical taste which subsequently became so conspicuous in the performances of Rooker, Hearne and Dayes, who were the immediate precursors of that period, when the English school of topography and landscape painting in oil, as well as water-colours, became the admiration of this enlightened age.

Paul Sandby drew in various styles, and in all with that freedom and address which displayed a mastery of hand. It has been asserted of this founder of water-colour painting, that he was deficient in feeling, a charge to which his memory is not justly amenable.

Feeling, in the acceptation of the term as applied to this department of painting, is to be viewed comparatively. No one conversant with the works in water-colours, the production of the present century, will say that the drawings preceding those of Turner and Girtin reached by many degrees that splendour of effect and general harmony, with all the attributes that constitute the pictorial charms which are so prevalent in the water-colour paintings of the many masters who now excel. It were the height of injustice, however, to deny to him the faculty of feeling, whose enlarged perceptions directing his own practice, left all his competitors far behind; and by substituting a right mode of representing nature, for that erroneous practice which had so long prevailed, opened the eyes of the rising generation of artists sufficiently to direct them how to proceed upon principles to the discovery of truth. Before his time there was no landscape Art; all, or almost all, was ignorant pretension; he laid the foundation, and

a solid one it was; and on that his successors raised that beautiful superstructure which is delightful to behold.

Paul Sandby's early style of drawing was effected by carefully delineating the forms of all the objects of his composition with a pen-ned outline. Buildings, barges, boats, cattle, sheep, even trees were thus etched with determinate forms, and all was shadowed into a simple effect of light and shadow with Indian-ink. The chiaroscuro thus wrought, the whole was coloured by simple washes, merely approximating the general tint of each locality. These works were appropriately designated tinted drawings.

His second and improved style of representing his views and pictorial compositions was by subduing the rigid appearance of the outline, and adding richness, though with cautious timidity, so as to emulate the effect of a picture. This step in improvement was effected by a careful repetition of the tinting, and by compounding a greater variety of hues, deepening his repetitions as the objects approached the foreground. In certain scenes which he depicted on the then rural road, that commencing at the end of his terrace, (St. George's Row) led to Bayswater, scenes which he carefully shaded upon the spot, the amenities of a picture were intimated with a charm, though wanting in force, which might well rescue his venerable memory from the charge of "want of feeling."

His superior style, and that on which he hoped to establish a lasting reputation, was that in which he wrought in body water-colour painting. Some of the subjects which he produced in the pigments thus prepared were executed with great mastery and painter-like skill. Several subjects representing woodland scenery, studies from nature in Windsor great-park, and in the adjacent forest, which were painted by commission for his patron, King George the Third, were much and deservedly admired by all the painters in oil, who had, long before water-colour Art had assumed the character of painting, established a high reputation for their British school. Paul Sandby and his brother Thomas were eminent in their day for the truth and spirit with which they drew and painted forest trees.

Paul Sandby for many years owed almost his entire means to the encouragement which he derived from teaching drawing. The ladies of numerous families of the highest rank, for more than half a century, had benefitted by his instruction.

Mr. Sandby was handsome in person and of gentlemanly manners; he had the honor of being personally known to, and much esteemed by his sovereign and her majesty Queen Charlotte; indeed, he had

the felicity of being regarded by personages of both sexes, any of whom a man of talent might be proud to boast, as he could, of being admitted in their society, not only as a professor of a liberal Art, but on the easy and desirable intimacy of a friend.

If proof were wanting to establish his reputation as the founder of the topographic style of drawing, reference need only be made to the engravings from his originals of the buildings of Blackfriars Bridge, and his masterly delineations of the Arcade, Covent-garden, St. James's palace gate entrance, and the richly pictorial view of the remains of Cardinal Wolsey's palace of Whitehall. Such complete specimens of Art had not hitherto emanated from any professor of the native school.

Mr. Sandby throughout life, and he lived to a patriarchal age, enjoying health and his faculties to the last, ever held in fond and grateful remembrance those ladies whom he had taught in his early days and who yet survived. To certain of these he sent as new year's gifts, little packets of cards, on which he amused himself in painting in landscape designs in body-colours; some of which, executed when he had nearly attained his eightieth year, are still regarded as gems of Art.

The Art of water-colour painting was advanced another step by the practice of the ingenious Michael Angelo Rooker, whose topographical knowledge and pictorial taste are perpetuated by the series of views, engraved from his drawings of colleges, halls, and other ancient structures, which for many consecutive years adorned the celebrated Oxford Almanack.

This artist may be quoted as the first who, by the process of transparent water-colours, successfully attempted to depict landscape compositions, wherein ancient buildings formed the principal object of interest, with the depth and richness of local colour, which combined with a true and characteristic arrangement of form, constitute the veritable charm of the picturesque.

How it happened that no British artist had set about this mode of proceeding when drawing from nature, is not to be accounted for upon any philosophical principle of reasoning, for our poets had, in their rich descriptions of castles, abbeys, and monkish cells, which they made the subjects of their observation, detailed with the most perspicuous truth, and with all becoming associations, the charm which the tints of time have displayed in these localities. It is then most strange, that the painter, whose very craft is imitation, should have been blind to characteristics so obvious to the optics, whilst the poet should not only have discovered them, but made so exemplary a use of the discovery.

This is not the only cause, moreover, for our surprise, for the Dutch and the Flemish masters, some of whom practised here in the sixteenth century, produced topographical pictures, which sufficiently displayed the pictorial characteristics of local representations; and every city, town, village, and hamlet in our island abounded in prototypes congenial to the painter's art.

The surprise is not excited by the prevailing ignorance of the more abstract properties of local colour alone; but that the simple, obvious characteristics of form should have so long entirely escaped the intelligence of the painter's eye, else, doubtless, some one would have been found, amongst the thousands who used the pencil and the painting tools, who would have left us some proof that they were not entirely denied the faculty of pictorial perception. So, however, it must have been; for the annals of British art supply not one solitary instance of a native artist having advanced sufficiently in the legitimate study of topographical landscape, to enable him, even in the outline, to represent a scene with such fitness and propriety as to be worthy the name of art.

This universal ignorance is ever to be deplored by the amateur of topographic painting; for, had any artist of ancient times been capable of representing truly the scenery, such as it was in his day, our galleries and portfolios would be stored with treasures of art which would excite an interest beyond the power of words to express. Who, imbued with a feeling for these studies, but would revel in turning over a series of sketches such as Prout and Harding, Stanfield and Roberts, Cox and Cattermole, and a host of topographical painters of our day have brought, of late, from Italy, from Germany, France, and other parts of the continent. Had this desirable acquirement been known to the artists of old, then should we have had the gratification of beholding the Anglo Saxon palace at Westminster, and the various castles, palaces, and seats that bordered the Thames, between the bend of the river from Palace Yard to the ancient walls of London, when old St. Paul's Cathedral stood majestically on the top of Ludgate, with its lofty spire half hidden in the winter cloud. The subjects for the topographical pencil, up to the days of the Tudors, must have superabounded in pictorial subjects.

To return to the practice of Rooker, which shed such new light in the manner of representing views with reference to the veritable picture, he was the first who seated himself before the subject which he chose for delineation: and after drawing, with scrupulous fidelity, the outline of each object, he proceeded, with equal care, to represent

its local colour and effect. It was by this artist-like mode of studying nature, as it is technically termed, that others were taught to discover that light and shadow derived its pictorial effect from a due observance of reflection, a feature in painting, however, now universally practised, and as generally understood, but one, that until then had entirely escaped the perception of all who pretended to be painters.

Rooker having at length made the valuable discovery, others now pursued the same sensible mode of practice, and it was found that roads and paths were not necessarily to be tinted red gravel colour, nor posts and rails washed with a weak tint of orange; neither were tiles and chimneys to be coloured with the fiery red of chimney pots, nor trees with an unbroken mixture of Prussian-blue and gamboge. On the contrary, timber was made to look old, either as seen in reality on the boarding of a barn or a park paling, with the tiled roof of that russet tone in which time mantles antiquity, whether it be a work of art, as in ancient buildings, or of nature, as on the body and spreading branches of an oak, a beech, or that "painters' own tree," as Gainsborough used to say, "the ash."

Rooker having achieved thus much for art, it was only left for those who immediately succeeded him to super-add what was wanting, to render topographic art what it is, the most delightful, perhaps, taking it "for all in all," that ever engaged the eye and the pencil of the painter.

It may be said, that though this artist did not accomplish all that might be desired, yet he did almost as much as the materials with which he wrought admitted. His practice, moreover, was only occasionally with transparent water-colours, for his time was principally engaged in scene painting, he being for many years the chief of that department for the little theatre in the Haymarket, and had the reputation, with the exception of the great genius de Louthembourg, of being the best scene painter of the age.

Coeval with Michael Angelo Rooker was Thomas Hearne, whose pictorial taste contributed, in no small degree, to the improvement of the British school of topography. That well known work, entitled "Hearne and Byrne's Antiquities," engraved in the line manner by the latter, from the drawings of the former, has been held as the exemplar for all the splendid topographical works that have for the last half century adorned the libraries of the connoisseurs and collectors in every part of Europe.

Mr. Hearne was not a colourist; he however made no small compensation for the want of that quality, by the harmony of his chia-

roscuro, which, being wrought in cool and warm greys, and tinted with a general glow of warmth, his drawings were chaste and beautiful in effect.

There has been no method discovered for rendering scenery more effective and harmonious by simple means, than that pursued by this admired artist; it is, therefore, particularly worth the consideration of the amateur practitioner, as, by its means, a power may be acquired, which will enable those who cannot give up their whole time to that recondite study of art, which is indispensable to a professional painter, to produce a picture with all its attributes, and yet to represent a scene from nature with truth and all the amenities of form, light and shadow, with sufficient characteristic beauty to satisfy the most fastidious criticism, and delight the eye of taste.

Mr. Hearne's mode of proceeding, when he made a view from nature, commenced by looking at the subject for his picture by viewing it from many points, and designing it in his mind's eye before he put pencil to paper.

This judicious practice is particularly recommended to the attention of the amateur artist; for a material object in the art of design is obtained when the point of view, judiciously chosen, composes well, so as to form the entire subject of a picture. From the want of attention to this very important consideration, it happens with almost all tourists who draw for their amusement, that nine tenths of their sketches from nature, even if wrought with careful execution, are worth nothing, from the circumstance of each point of view being ill chosen, so that as a composition it is not worth the trouble of finishing.

Many treatises have been written upon the subject of composition, in which much learning is displayed in scientific technicalities, touching geometrical elevations, angles of incidence, mathematical proportions, and the like; whilst the obvious application of all that science can teach, may be discovered without any other mental exertion, than that which is dictated by good taste, a quality that is not so rare as may be supposed; for by reference to the general contour, which is observable in the topographic works of such artists as Hearne and Rooker, any sagacious eye may learn to select judiciously, by a due degree of reflection before they begin their sketch. These observations, be it understood, are not intended to lessen the merit of men of science, or to render science itself too cheap; but rather to encourage the amateur to exertion; for what has been done by those professional artists who have produced such models for imitation, may be compared to safe stepping stones, to enable amateurs to cross the stream of science with ease, by the labour of those who had tried its depths before.

Those amateurs then, who feel a becoming desire to excel in topographical design, cannot employ their time more profitably, than in selecting some of the most pictorial subjects to be found in Hearne and Byrne's *Architectural Antiquities*, and to draw every individual part carefully with black lead pencil, of a texture neither hard nor soft, such as will work with smoothness and freedom. Much care should be used in cutting the wood of the pencil, which should be shaved long, and so nicely tapered as not to leave angles of the lead. No instrument that has been discovered for the purpose of studying from nature is capable of such exquisite touch and tasteful execution as the black lead pencil.

It may not be irrelevant further to observe, that this instrument is no less useful and convenient for laying in the chiaroscuro of the design than for delineating the outline. One of the greatest living masters * of the British school of landscape observed, when expatiating on its properties, that he first opened his eyes to the charm of reading nature in the graphic language, through the medium of the black-lead pencil. In the neighbourhood of his residence were some obsolete brick-fields, with clay-pits, which after rain became ponds of pellucid water, to which ducks and geese resorted; the banks were prolific of weeds, and some pollard willows were congenially rooted thereon. Contemplating one bright summer morning, the harmonious combinations which this congregate of objects formed for pictorial representation, he took thither his sketch book, and with the black lead pencil rendered upon white paper, not only the forms of each part, but with scrupulous exactitude wrought the tones in all their gradations, and as he proceeded, such is the charm of truth, the mere chiaroscuro, seemed to his abstracted optics veritably colour. This mode of practice became so captivating, that the gravel pits, with the animate and inanimate objects immediately on the site, were studied in every point of view and choice, and intelligent the studies were; and these, be it repeated, made him a painter.

Hearne's practice, when he had chosen his point of view, was to represent it by a careful outline, attending not only to the general proportions according to the principals of linear perspective, but with minute attention to the parts. "An accomplished outline," said a great epic painter, "constituted half of the picture." In topographic study from nature, an outline rendered with taste and feeling is an important achievement, for, in the delineation of the mutilated walls of

* A. W. Callcott, R. A.

an ancient structure, its turrets, gates, windows, and buttresses, individually constitute a considerable portion of its picturesque charm. Those who sketch too hastily, not being sufficiently aware of this, content themselves with the general contour of the outline, and leave the filling up of the parts to the memory or the imagination; such indiscriminate mode of study, however, will never enable the eye and the hand to produce a picture.

Hearne then proceeded from the careful general outline to the minutæ of parts, taking care to copy each with that fitness and characteristic truth which no imagination can supply. It is by attention to these essential observances that the perception of the artist is enriched, his taste matured, and his facility rendered so complete, that his works, almost without an effort, assume the appearance of reality.

When these preparatory advances were completed, (operations by the way, than which nothing can be more delightful, as an affair of almost creation, so magically does the scene grow under the influence of a well directed pencil,) then, the whole by his usual process was tenderly gone over again, with a penned outline, and finally shadowed with washes of a grey tint for the distant parts, and a black or brownish tint as the scene advanced to the foreground; each shadow in form, quality of tone, general breadth, and subservient individuality, forming together a picture, which for breadth and chaste feeling, as accomplished in his most felicitous drawings, was truly captivating.

It is no mean compliment to the style of this very ingenious artist, to state that Turner and Girtin sedulously copied his drawings, from which they obtained that fidelity of style, and tasteful perception, which constituted the ground work of their future fame.

The next in rotation who may be incorporated amongst the original founders of the British school of painting in water-colours is John Cozens, who took up a department in the study of landscape, and cultivated it with a success, which it had been erroneously supposed, the limited power prescribed to colours thus prepared, was incapable of effecting.

Until this ingenious and enterprising genius appeared, it was one of the dogmas of connoisseurship, that water colour art was totally incompetent to the representation of mountain and distant scenery, such as the classic regions of Italy had supplied to the pencil of Claude de Lorraine, the Poussins and other celebrated landscape painters of the olden schools.

Cozens, almost as it were by intuition, felt that the enterprise was not only possible, but that he could undertake to prove it so, by his own graphic powers. He went to Italy, chose for his first essay one of the most extensive scenes in that beautiful region, and represented its mountains, rivers, woods, temples, and all that the view embraced, with a general truth of character, such as nature represented it, under the magical influence of incidental light, and the charm of aerial perspective. This bold attempt he accomplished with that classic feeling and congenial sentiment, which at once proved, that so far from the presumed limitation expressed, water colours on the contrary, were pre-eminently suited for the display of this exalted species of landscape.

Having thus enumerated the names, and briefly described the works of the ingenious artists, whose joint labours in their various departments and degrees contributed to the consummation of the first epoch of the British school of water colour painting, I purpose in the succeeding essay, to speak more at large upon the subject.

The second epoch, which commencing with Turner and Girtin, includes with them all the painters in water colours whose congregate talents have raised the reputation of this department of graphic study to its present renown.

OPINIONS ON ART.

(Continued.)

THE lovers of these arts seldom or never disturb the tranquillity either of kingdoms or families; and if their lives are not very useful, they are always harmless, and often ornamental to society. The human mind cannot subsist without occupation, even during its intervals of relaxation from useful and serious employment; and if it has no intellectual amusement to soothe its lassitude and inquietude during those intervals, it will fly for relief to ruinous dissipation or gross sensuality.

It is true that excessive attention to any of these arts often withdraws the mind from the study or cultivation of others more important and

beneficial; but it oftener withdraws it from indulgences which are more criminal, and destructive both to the individual and to society.

The frequenting of theatres, and reading romances and novels, often occupy time which might be more profitably employed in the active pursuits of life, but which probably would be more profusely wasted in the more frivolous amusements of the coffee house or the assembly room, or in the more ruinous indulgences of the tavern, the gaming house, or the brothel.

With some qualification, and some apparent contradiction, the writer has, nevertheless, brought into view, not only the pleasure of the pursuit, but the advantage resulting from cultivating a love and knowledge of the fine arts.

What, it may be asked, does he mean by using the qualified term, "the only moral good," as if it were hardly any good at all; and then going on to allow, that it makes men good, at least harmless subjects; that it prevents evil and ruinous pursuits, and that its influence is beneficial to the mind in hours of lassitude or inquietude? Surely this is recommendation enough; and it will not be foreign to the purpose of these remarks, to point out, more in detail, the pleasure and advantages which a knowledge of the fine arts brings with it.

After the inference which may be drawn from the last writer, it may seem needless to seek farther to establish what must be admitted; yet a passage occurs to my mind, so strong in its expression, so marked with energy and exalted views of art and its principles, that, before going into the proposed details, I feel I cannot omit it here.

"All ignorance of beauty, or depravity of taste, is defective animation; all improvement of these, is increased sensibility: the powers of the mind, as well as of the body, being rendered more perfect by a proper use of them."

"To question, whether an improved taste is an advantage is in some measure to doubt; whether it is better to be, or not to be; to live, or not to live. One devoid of taste is dead to all the finer feelings."*

This is very strong language, and would, if admitted in its fullest extent, condemn, mentally, to intellectual death a far greater portion of mankind than it would be reasonable to include in its protest; for it may be doubted, if Doctor Johnson, or Oliver Goldsmith, (the latter, one of the most beautiful graphic writers that ever graced our language), both the friends and intimates of Sir Joshua Reynolds, ever enjoyed

* Donaldson on Taste.

the benefits of a taste for the arts, or ever understood, or could appreciate the merits of that great painter.

The pleasure of looking at a picture is no small enjoyment, and may be said to be participated by all that have eyes, from the lowest to the highest; and if the humble cottager cannot appreciate or possess pictures of worth, he will decorate his walls with such as he can understand and feel; nor should this indulgence of his fancy in fine colours and meretricious ornament be fastidiously scoffed at, or his want of taste imputed to him as a fault; these ornaments serve to give, in his eyes, a value to his humble habitation.

The pleasure of taking a walk is no small gratification; to look upon the face of nature as it is seen in fields and meadows, fills the minds of all but the grossly sensual with pleasurable emotions. But when this gratification is accompanied by a cultivated perception, it more than doubles, it adds another sense to the enjoyment.

It is the same with art: it is pleasant to visit a collection of pictures, but how is that pleasure increased by knowing in what these transcripts of nature resemble their prototypes, how and by what means the artist effected his purpose; in what he may appear to have failed, and where he has greatly succeeded: to mark the progress of his improvement; his style altered, or a new one adopted, in the different stages of his practice; these, with innumerable points in the qualities of painting, observable only to the eye of the artist or amateur, make only a part of the pleasures to be derived from the knowledge of art.

To possess a collection, is to have, as is said of content, a continual feast; nor is it necessary that a collection should be made up of the first or finest examples of art, to minister abundantly to the gratification of the possessor. There is often much of the adventitious in expensive or unique productions, that no rational being would ever think of valuing, and that good taste would rather reject than be in the possession of; and there is often so much of what is revolting in the subject, or its accessories, that good sense or proper feeling would never admit; indeed, with some limitation, the axioms of Pope would well apply, that "a man not only shews his taste, but his virtue, by the paintings which hang upon his walls."

To shew the love of art, and set in view its influential character, I shall exhibit two examples: the first is a noble lord,* receiving a gentleman who called upon him, in his dressing room; thinking it necessary to apologize for the seeming want of ceremony or etiquette, made his excuse, by saying, "You see, Sir, I have been making a

* The noble Lord was either Lord Northwick or Lord Northesk.

new purchase; that beautiful Leonard da Vinci. I have hung it in this place, that, while I am dressing, I lose no time in looking at and admiring it; I seem there to have it all to myself." The other was in travelling with a Leeds merchant. The subject of discourse fell upon the intended exhibition to be got up at that place; and the notions of this gentleman in matters of painting will be understood, when confessing that his knowledge of art was very superficial, he said,

"I have purchased a picture by an artist of the name of Ibbottson, the subject, peasants going to market; and I never enter the room in which it is placed but it operates like a gleam of sunshine, and I feel cheered by looking at it."

A better comment on the pleasures of Art would not have been made. And well would it be, if every merchant on the Royal Exchange, every broker on the Stock Exchange, and every man of business whose means would allow, would be brought to look on Art in a similar way, and like our Leeds merchant, after the shouldering and struggling of an anxious and busy day, find quiet and repose in the contemplations of some pictured view. In landscape painting the recurrence of tranquil scenery and calm effects are found more than in any other class of painting. I never can look on Wilson's view of Sion House, from the banks of the Thames, but I feel and enjoy its soothing influence. The magic of this picture is extraordinary, for let furniture, gilding, carpeting, or whatever it may be, come in contact with it, the quiet and placid effect is never for a moment lost. It is thus that scenes in nature become associated with those of Art, and an interest is given to every object, whether pastoral or romantic, beautiful or sublime. The land, the ocean, the elements, and the great globe itself, with all which it inhabits, come within the scope of Art, and furnish objects for the painter's views.

In making up a collection, it will be necessary to observe in what spirit this should be done. By some it is a matter of calculation, it is to pay them interest. This will never do, paintings in the true view of possessing them, should be as household gods, at least objects of regard, and associated with intellectual enjoyment.

The man who purchases a pipe of wine, well knows that he sinks a certain sum. He is not foolish enough to think of other profits than the pleasure of hospitality, and enjoying with his friends an exhilarating glass, unless he is one of those sordid beings, who never give, but to take with interest.

In making a collection, it is necessary to avoid certain prejudices, which are the besetting sins of persons in an elevated rank of life. With them it is not sufficient that the picture is good,—it must have

been in the possession of some one whose rank and fashion give a sanction to the purchase; there are frequent instances in which such prejudices operate to the exclusion of many valuable works of Art. I shall bring forward two instances, in which the wedding garment of fashion or name being wanting, some of the finest examples of Art were excluded a place in the gallery of Vertu, and their claims disallowed, because they were brought forward by an artist, with no other pretensions than his profession.

The first of these examples was brought into this country by a Mr. Francia, a landscape painter, and said to have been an altar piece in a church at St. Omers. The subjects, painted in compartments, were the principal actions in the life of some distinguished saint,—I believe St. Bruno; it was painted by Hemellinck, before the time of Albert Durer, and while possessing a similar style to that artist's works, had still higher qualities in design and colouring. The picture was in high preservation, and as a whole, was one of the best productions of the period. In a national point of view it would have been an acquisition to Art, and would have been a grace and ornament to the noblest collection. There was one thing worthy of remark, that in one of the compartments was seen part of a painting on the wall of the same character with Hans Holbein's Dance of Death, which circumstance necessarily precludes Hans Holbein from the credit of the original thought on that subject.

The other instance in which prejudice was found to undervalue what was good in Art, is as follows:—

Six paintings, heads of Apostles, were purchased at an auction by a person in trade, they were covered with a coating evidently intended to disguise their excellence. In this state they were sold for the small sum of ten pounds, and when this coating was removed and the pictures varnished, they were the admiration of all who understood or could appreciate the merits of Fine Art. They were evidently the work of some Spanish painter, (or from their various styles, painters), from the manner and variety which appeared in their execution and character; some resembling the works of Leonardo da Vinci, others of Vandyk, Rubens, or Spagnoletti. Had they been consigned from Spain to any man of distinction in this country, they would have been applauded to the very echo; as it was, they were only fine pictures, painted by nobody knew who, and brought into the market by one whom nobody knew. And thus it is, has been, and more or less, will ever be, till the cobwebs of prejudice are swept away by the writings of a Shée, or the arguments of some equally able and candid critic.

Instructions how to admire, and with what, and when to be pleased, if too minutely entered into, or detailed at too great length, not only become tedious, but betray a want of good ground on which to build an hypothesis. I shall for the present leave the pleasures to be derived from works of Art, trusting that good taste and good sense will have their proper effects; and speak in my next on their utility.

UTILITY OF ART.

It would be more a matter of declamation than of information to argue or reason upon the utility of the arts, and the benefits connected with their elevation in civilized life; and the reason for entering into a detail of their use and application, is the same as when men forget their obligations it is sometimes necessary to refresh their memory, and waken their attention to a proper sense of them. Benefits made common, are too often "benefits forgot." Some such course may be allowed on the present occasion.

It is often needful to place a picture at some distance, that it may have its proper effect upon the sight. It is necessary in some instances to deprive men of their liberty for a time, that they may know how in future to value the blessing. Let it be imagined that for some given time, the arts of drawing and design were removed out of sight and out of practice; would any expedients, however ingenious, be resorted to, to supply their place.

From written descriptions of complicated machinery, who could work? blunder would follow upon blunder, till patience and effort would at once give way. It is only to let this fanciful notion be carried on through the various branches in which the fine arts have been found useful; and it may serve to convey some idea of their value, by imagining their loss. The coinage of art no longer in circulation, recourse must be had to the objects themselves; instead of opening a book or folio to examine the form of an elephant, we must go to see the animal; and so on, of every other thing: but through the medium of art, in its present use, we have only to desire its appearance, and it will come, not in conjectural, but in the truth of its form and character.

What lamentations have been raised when barbarians or fanatics have destroyed works of art; their value became doubled by their

loss. But for the arts, where would have been the wonders of the ancient world? they must have remained in their place and perished, and been unknown, except to the travelled few. But not to pursue this fanciful theory to establish truths no one will think of denying, I shall venture a few remarks on the connexion between literature and the arts, and endeavour to shew in what instances they become of mutual advantage to each other.

All descriptive writing is a picture held up to the mind's eye; and every man, according to the measure of his taste and understanding, is competent to follow the writer, to view in the spirit of the performance the very form and texture of the author's subject. On the other hand, the poet, the historian, and the novelist, by looking on the noble examples of art, will enrich their pages with the exalted images derived from the works of the painter. Perhaps no period has produced more of what is termed graphic writing than the present. It is not difficult to recognize in the works of the late Mrs. Radcliff descriptions evidently derived from pictures, and the works of Salvator Rosa, Canaletto, and others, may be readily traced in her writings. Sir Walter Scott's mind must have been richly imbued with a taste for the arts, and a knowledge of their principles; his descriptions are drawn from the objects themselves; his prototype is nature, and, instead of describing from pictured art, his works afford, not merely hints, but characters and scenes; inventions they may be called, which the painter has only to embody. But whether the writer takes his subject from the painter's art, or the artist his from the author's writing, it is sufficiently evident they come in mutual aid to each other.

The terms of art afford means both to exemplify and ornament the subjects of declamation. The senate, the pulpit, and the bar are alike indebted to their use. Pictures speak a language understood by all, at least, as far as imitation and resemblance are concerned; and in the early period of life, from almost infancy to childhood, the picture book has the power of excitement beyond any combination of words which could then be understood. Indeed, so attractive are these graphic resemblances, that, in many instances, they have induced attempts at imitation in the child, which have, in after years, been matured in the talents of the man. A mere predilection, however, has frequently been mistaken for the marks of genius, and has led to great errors, by making painting too often chosen as a profession; and this has multiplied the mediocrity of art to an extent, which, if not judiciously checked, must end, not only in loss of time, but in ruin to

the individual, and is highly injurious to real merit;* as, for one person who has even a moderate judgment in works of art, there are hundreds with whom "bustling mediocrity" will pass for genius.

As an article of trade the arts have been eminently useful to the commerce of the country. Prints have been exported to a considerable amount, until the frauds of dealers glutted the markets with such an indiscriminate cargo of good and bad, that the balance in our favour greatly lowered, until it might be said to be entirely lost.

In the present day the examples of fine and elaborate works of art may vie, and in many instances take place of our continental rivals, particularly in book prints, and embellishments of that class; but the allowed importation of foreign prints, and the additions continually poured out from native exertions, must, and does tend to make both art and artists cheap, in comparison to their former estimation. A few, indeed, of extraordinary merit and character, in this, and every branch of the fine arts, will obtain attention, and ensure purchasers; but the number bears no proportion to the great mass, whose labours may be said to be in vain. Hence come the complaints of artists, who "go in the account" for such, and who are too apt to imagine they deal in the necessities, not in the superfluities of life. It is reported of Hogarth, that, on the proposal of a yearly exhibition, he said, it would multiply art to its own destruction: without drawing so sweeping a conclusion, the truth of his assertion is, at this moment, felt through the whole range of the profession; and scarce any thing, but the starvation system pointed out by Mr. Malthus, is likely to thin the ranks of art, for the benefit of the survivors.†

It is an ungracious and an unpleasant task, while pointing out the beauty and utility of the fine arts, to conjure up the spectres of want and disappointment to the minds of the young, the ardent and the aspiring, but experience tells us that the young, the ardent and the aspiring will, in nine instances out of ten, take their own views of the subject, and their own way in prosecuting it. It will be enough, if from our pointing out these salutary paths, one who has been seized

* We cannot agree with our worthy contributor; the blaze of genius was never yet extinguished by the feeble glimmer of the artistic glow-worm. If it once dashes beyond the trammels of early necessities, it is a task of difficulty to arrest its progress; and certainly its career of high and dignified art cannot be impeded by the crouching, conciliatory tone of accommodating, do-anything mediocrity.—Ed.

† We imagine this is an evil, like most others, that will cure itself; the market of art has been overstocked with bad goods, yet when it is discovered that the above mentioned starvation awaits mediocrity, instinct, in default of common sense, will prevent an uncalled for increase of artists.—Ed.

with the mania of becoming an artist, is led to pause on his path and measure back his steps to more lucrative paths of employment.

What then, it may be asked, is the utility of making the Fine Arts a branch of liberal education, if the pursuit of them is attended with so much of failure and disappointment. It is that the liberally educated may enjoy the advantage of a cultivated perception, without the necessity of that practice, which, though it affords much powerful excitement, and some satisfaction, yet has many drawbacks for the professor, while it comes in the way of amusement for the amateur; who after all feeds on the sweets of art, without the labour of producing it. But it is principally that the hours of leisure, and the eye of refinement, may be filled and satisfied in the view of nature as well as of art: and though it may be a bold assertion to advance, we think that no man has exercised the faculties of his mind to the extent of their capability, who comes into and goes out of the world, without appreciating the works of his Creator in the view thus recommended.

There is yet another advantage connected with what is called a common education, which every boy of common understanding might be put upon to practice, equally with his writing, that is, he might be instructed or rather put to the task of making certain geometrical forms, as the square, the triangle, and the circle, without the aid of rule or compass: this would give him the power, (without making him an artist,) of expressing any simple and direct form he might have occasion to advert to in the course of most employments; it would correct his eye in a variety of instances, and all the essential lines in drawing would be under his control.

Brief as these hints are, and few as the details of art may be, there are enough to call the attention of some, who take things for granted that they must be, because they are: as those who enjoy the produce of a foreign land, seldom take thought of the toil, adventure, or hazard, which brings them to their boards, their furniture, or their dress.

I shall next proceed to comment on those essential qualities of art pointed out by the writer with whose treatise I began, which follow in the order of design, colouring, chiaroscuro, and composition.

SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

"Mankind seem at that period, to have recovered the powers of inquiring and of thinking for themselves, faculties of which they had long lost the use; and fond of the acquisition, they exercised them with great boldness upon all subjects. *They were not now afraid of entering an uncommon path or of embracing a new opinion. Novelty appears rather to have been a recommendation of a doctrine, and instead of being startled when a daring hand drew aside or tore the veil which covered or established errors, the genius of the age applauded and aided the attempt.*"—ROBERTSON, Charles V.

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

"THE Society of British Artists having formed a collection of the works of deceased and living painters of the English school, claims with some degree of confidence, the patronage of the British public for its Exhibition. That claim rests on several grounds.—In the first place, the Exhibition is of a perfectly novel character: embracing, as it does, specimens of the works of nearly seventy artists, whose talents were admitted by their contemporaries, and whose reputation has been subsequently confirmed by general consent. In the next place, it is evident that an exhibition of the works of celebrated deceased masters is calculated to benefit, in an essential degree, the race of living artists, who will here have an opportunity of carefully inspecting, and deriving instruction from many of those pictorial efforts which are the pride and honour of the British school.

For the purpose of more effectually accomplishing the latter object, the society has placed the productions of the living in close contact with some of the best performances of the dead; in order that, by an attentive examination, the emulous artist of the present day may ascertain the means by which his most favoured predecessors attained their high and justly deserved reputation. With this especial view the society has invited those exhibitors who are not enrolled amongst its Members to work on their pictures for two days prior to the opening of the exhibition; being of opinion that as much may be acquired by touching on their own works in the presence of so many fine originals, as by making mere cold copies from the most admired productions of others.

Every known Artist will, on application, receive permission to view the EXHIBITION GRATIS."

A novel experiment has to encounter the decisions of two classes of minds; the one, surmising difficulties and oftentimes danger from any attempt at innovation; the other, hailing with irreflective delight the dawn of novelty. There are others, too few to form a class, who, having eradicated from their minds the night-shade of illiberality, have encouraged with care that respect and veneration which clings to established and beneficial customs, yet, who view with deep and well founded interest, any innovation which involves neither meanness nor malignity, and promises an extended sphere of observation.

Comparison is, next to perception, the power most requisite in the pursuit of Art; yet rendered the least conducive in freeing artists from the dogmas of schools: the latter power is seldom educated, and the former but rarely excited. It is but too inherent in human nature to receive a mental impress without analysis, and seldom to profit by means of comparison. The ignorance resulting from apathy is called in to prop up what are mis-called established principles; for none can be truly established that have not elicited scrutiny: and as it is more easy to receive the opinions of others, than to form conclusions of our own, the progress of error is encouraged and accelerated. Many are apt to imagine that the contemplation of a variety of objects is liable to distract the judgment; but it may be asserted as an axiom, that a concentration of power is the focus of extended observation; that well digested facts produce an unity of force, and that the fulcrum of knowledge enables the lever of industry to shake the foundations of error.

Comparison too often depends upon the fidelity of memory; and too often the primary impress is either weakened or lost, before the object of counter examination is attained: few retain the vivid traces on the mind's tablet with sufficient truth, to be able at a distant opportunity to institute the desired comparison: intervening objects weaken the impression,—it floats before the mental vision an indistinct mass; in vain does the fancy attempt to restore the connecting links, the complex idea is dissolved, and abstract qualities alone successively attract the mind. It requires also a most critical vision to detect the defects of a painter, by referring him to himself alone; the variations of tone are exquisitely subtle, and more illusive than the varieties of form: the eye glides more securely from the Antinous to the Gladiator, and from that to the Hercules, with a full perception of the grades of form, than it is likely to do from counteracting styles and tones in painting. Even the standard we endeavour to attain, by which we hope to form just conclusions, is a treacherous guide, and all these difficulties united, tend to convince us of the subtlety of taste. Whatever,

therefore, obviates the necessity of depending on memory, facilitates the progress of comparison. The present exhibition is, accordingly, one of considerable importance; it is a congress of Art, where delegates appointed by the various styles plead their cause in the general assembly. It reminds us of Hogarth's battle of the pictures, where ages war with ages, styles with styles, tones with tones, and costumes with costumes. An exhibition of the present day is an odd assemblage, where the mind is distracted by the hundred tongues of Art; but how much more eccentric is one like that we treat of; where the fresh, the fair, the gay, mingle, but not in fellowship, with the deep toned and the faded. The roses of yesterday, clustering round the relics of the past, present subjects of deep reflection. The first necessarily arising is the effect of time in the mellowing or destroying of pictures, and the second as to the progress or retrogradation of Art. The first appeals to the man of science, the second to the patriot.

If brilliancy and depth be the characteristics of nature, how can that work, which is veiled by the gloom of time, whose exquisite carnations and pearly greys have sunk into heavy unattractive tints, be considered a faithful transcript and valued by the enlightened; unless its value be referred to a different criterion, one that espouses not the cause of absolute truth, but proceeds upon the grounds of scientific harmony. The eye long accustomed to the study of the old masters, acquires a partial view of nature; it perceives her through the *translations* of others, whose ideas become the foundation of our own. We consequently imbibe a relish for artificial modes of expression; since, if the masters we revere, acquired their renown by their truth to nature, their works tinged by time, must have departed considerably from the test of their pristine beauty; and if we allow that truth is the highest prerogative of human powers, the works thus altered, although rendered valuable by the addition of charms appreciated by the scientific, still have forfeited their claims on our admiration for the highest quality; unless, as it is sometimes asserted, the educated mind pierces the detrimental or enhancing veil, (as it may be considered) and presents it in its original lustre. This, it must be confessed, is an operation that can only be performed by a favoured few, and as such, cannot be established as a principle. With respect to the harmony produced by time, it must be considered that if a picture at the end of a century is harmonious in its colouring, it is pretty clear that it must have been so originally, only in a higher key, for the hand of age weighs equally, or else in such a partial manner, that the equilibrium is destroyed. Thus, it will be perceived, a picture either gradually

darkens or matures unequally; if the former, it is not more in harmony, as far as the principles of colour go, than it was originally, if the latter, it is certainly unimproved by time. We may then conclude that in age it assumes a different species of harmony, more grateful, perhaps, to the educated eye, than the primitive blush of awakened nature, as it blooms under the painter's hand. We dispute not conventional beauty, but uphold the cause of primitive truth.

To the man of science, then, this conflict of the grave, the gay, the lively, the severe, is of infinite importance, it brings fairly into the arena, conflicting reputations, and rejecting the assumptions already advanced, leaves the judgment in possession of their respective claims.

To the patriot, it is a subject of still deeper interest; and if national glory has a voice in the human breast, it must be viewed as one of vital import. It has ever been a thankless task to awaken the British public to a due sense of the importance of the Fine Arts: the mightiest voices have resounded in vain; and the tomb alone has crushed the lofty aspirations, and checked the patriot sighs of men born to greatness. Shall we then, the humblest that have glowed with enthusiasm, venture to hope for success? Alas! no, our hopes lie crouching beside the chariot of Time;—we write but to fulfil the deepest emotions of our heart, having sworn to labour in the cause of dignity and beauty against all opposition, and in despite of ignorance and apathy. We do not, however, impute all the blame to the public; those who are devoid of knowledge, must not be censured if they fail to appreciate wisdom—the blind are not expected to bless the light—but from those who have been nurtured in the realms of imagination; whose infant minds have travelled over the creations of intellect, and have felt their bosoms dilate at the pictured glories of ancient and modern art, from them, indeed, we are justified in expecting the ardour of devotees. Yet, if we view with candour the productions of the present day, however we may be arrested by occasional glimpses, worthy of a brighter region, we are forced to confess, that the mantle of our ancestors has shrunk in its descent to us. When we take into consideration the advantages we have enjoyed, and the patronage that has been granted, which although improperly directed, is extensive; it is astonishing that the nineteenth century should prove retrograde in its course. There is a laxity of ennobling principle pervading but too many ranks of artists; a mere reference to individual feeling, incompatible with the grand aim of art: a deficiency of power in the sinews of artistic knowledge, and a want of enlightened and emulous perseverance. Affectation is mistaken for grace, crudeness for brilliancy, indistinctness for aerial

perspective, artificial effects for skilful arrangements, and exaggeration of form for vigour and knowledge. The very defect we shudder at with artistic horror in the French, we are ourselves guilty of, in no trifling degree, that of imitation, or monotony of style. We have successively painted *à la* Reynolds, and *à la* Lawrence, and scarcely any style that has achieved excellence has escaped the train of caricaturists, that cluster like ignoble satellites around the disc of Genius.

It will be inferred, by vanity or dulness alone, that we do not estimate the British school: we glory in its beauty, but shrink from its deformity. The truly insignificant escape censure, but merit debased by its own apathy deserves the lash. We are national to the heart's core; but are fearless in our reprobation of evil. We hail the exhibition presented to our notice by the society of British artists, as a hand writing on the wall, that will unfold a tale, replete with instruction and the means of improvement. We implore artists to lose all contracted views, to forget their own bias, and to enter into the liberal views of this meritorious society; which allows them a free ingress to this museum of comparative painting. If the French artist has the weakness of believing David immaculate, his English brother is not exempt from a similar weakness, in favour, perhaps, of other less meritorious models. When will the liberal arts enlighten their votaries? We must however to the task of noticing the merits of the exhibition. The past mingles with the future; a past, not rendered brilliant by foreign talent, but endeared by the efforts of British heads and hands. Exotics may fascinate the eye, and rouse nature's universal voice; they may excite an enthusiasm, both innocent and ennobling: but the survey of blooming home bred flowers, as they enamel the parent soil, though untinged by the dyes of a burning clime, demand our sympathy and gratitude, making an irresistible appeal to the patriot breast. We feel humbled when we think of the loftier efforts of former days; yet viewing our own school alone, we can indulge in enthusiasm and pride.

With the exception of some few productions, it is entirely English; and, as a first attempt, is deserving of praise and encouragement. In future years the selection may be more choice, and the usual cry of unfit places may be obviated by a comparison of styles, rendered totally unfit for fellowship. For instance, behold Raeburn's massive head, No. 164, and then cast an eye of pity on its neighbour, poor Rembrandt Worlidge, who dwindles into insignificance before the ponderous lineaments of John Cowley, Esq. There is much about Raeburn's works which indicates genius, of a minor class to be sure,

yet possessing powerful claims on our attention. Although we refuse him the merit of pure colour, and find his execution devoid of that art which hides itself, we are struck with his consistency in divesting nature of petty effects, referring her to some broad standard in his mind; and for a painter, who possesses not the power so peculiarly conspicuous in Raphael, that of tracing the windings of nature, or boasts not the energy to explore them, we do not know a more beneficial plan, than assuming some general idea of representation, and forcing the vision to accommodate itself to it. We are aware that it encourages mediocrity; but mediocrity alone would follow such a course. One of the greatest difficulties a tyro has to experience, is learning to see nature with reference to imitation; not only in drawing, but in colouring, is this difficulty paramount. The youthful eye is apt to be misled by that which is striking, without reflecting whether it is striking from truth or novelty. In Raeburn, especially, is this principle developed: his vigorous pencil and broad effects delight the eye; but it must be referred to the pleasure we experience in receiving easy impressions. The truth of the principle of breadth is, with him, carried to a pitch sometimes exaggerated, as we shall ascertain by adverting to Reynolds, in some of whose three quarters, the exquisite transition from shade to half tint is given with amazing truth. The tints of Raeburn oftentimes remind us of coloured sands, crudely layered on with washes of lime: his deep uncompromising shadows make us sigh for Jackson's transparent depths. His portraits, however, are all dignified; they excite not a wish of fellowship, they woo us not; yet they impress us with respect. Lawrence made all his men courtiers: Raeburn made all his philosophers. Of Reynolds, we possess fourteen specimens; not all equally favourable, such as No. 2. *The First Duchess of Leinster*, for instance, where there is only a small piece of figured silk to recommend it; but then we are made ample amends by its companion, No. 10, *The Duke of Leinster*, a mild, thoughtful head, painted with great boldness and truth: the attitude is easy and dignified, and renders it worthy of being selected as a model. Lawrence's *Sir W. Curtis* keeps its ground well, even beside Reynolds; would that he always did! there is a simplicity about this picture, that contrasts forcibly with the President's more gaudy efforts. The hands are not worthy of the rest; they appear unfinished. We turn with pain to such a meretricious work of art as No. 53, portraits of her late majesty *Queen Caroline* and the *Princess Charlotte*. The attitude and character of the little princess are totally unmeaning,—the latter most remote from juvenility. The Queen appears floating

about, clinging to the harp for support. Under it is a little head by Harlowe, sweetly painted, but rather hard, and wanting in pulpliness. This painter possessed the power, much lacking among English artists, of drawing with the pencil. To the left is a production, of which any age and any country might boast. No. 43, by Jackson, a head of tremendous power; not the power of Raeburn, but a mellow, careful style, where the choicest hues, each appropriately placed, produce such a powerful effect of reality, that the brush is scarcely thought of—the consummate skill that created it remaining a mystery. Here again was a painter of partial genius: whose efforts are not in the highest walk; yet who, amidst an astonishing inequality, at times produced some of the finest heads in the world. The man, who in one effort, shocked by careless indifference of drawing, and propriety of execution, dazzled the next by his exquisite truth,—he disgusted with dirt and slime, yet enchanted by flesh and air. Compared with Reynolds he wanted dignity and ease, and his execution appears slight and scratchy—they both laboured under the same disadvantage—want of power in drawing. Compared with Lawrence, he wants elegance and careful delineation of the various parts—possessing more truth but wanting refinement. When we compare him with Raeburn, we find less power of pencil, but less monotony, and consequently more truth. It is in the latter quality, that Jackson was indeed pre-eminent; leaving a brilliant fame traced in the annals of his country. We turn to another name, grateful to an English bosom; that of Opie. His plain, unsophisticated, pictorial language, may shock the fastidious; but to those who can appreciate the bold intentions of an original mind, Opie is replete with charms. What decided *actions* are his compositions,—no figures to let,—no straggling splashes of an incoherent pencil,—no personage popt in against his will, to fill up an inconvenient space; his mind disdained petty artifices; it was a quarry, not a polishing shed; and all is presented by him in its original vigour. No. 155, *Death of Archbishop Sharp*, is, perhaps, the most *outré* of his works: its boldness degenerating into coarseness; yet, withal, it is a masterly production. ~~The~~ French, to be sure, would shrug up their shoulders at it, as they do ~~for~~ the greater part, at their own splendid Gericault; but, it is to be hoped, we are wiser. We do not uphold Opie's manner, or proclaim it as the best possible; but merely wish to do that which common sense dictates,—take his matter with his manner, since we cannot have it without. It is the height of absurdity to deny ourselves the pleasure of Johnson's information, because we may dislike his style. Certainly, if we are

forced to particularize, we must object to the coarse inelegant figure of the female, and the want of choice in most of the forms: but, altogether, we are happy to be able to clear the fence that arrests the progress of the timid. We have enjoyed many an intellectual banquet, furnished by Opie, and have reason to be satisfied, that a relish for inferior qualities does not at all diminish our veneration for the higher attributes.

No. 106, George Lennard Newnham, Esq., is a strikingly characteristic portrait. It is painted with the most intense vigour; intellect seems to have been dashed from the pencil, rapid as the painter's view: the eyes appear to concentrate vision and thought; the decision of the mouth supports the character of the whole, and it strikes the beholder as life rendered motionless, by the impress of vivid ideas, or the pursuit of a train of rapid imagery. Turn from this "pale cast of thought," to its whole length neighbour, No. 101, by Reynolds. How he sits smiling at his lot.—His harbour is evidently completed, and guiltless of deep thought, unmoved (save but to smile) by the fantasies of his pallid neighbour, he serenely contemplates his achieved work, already anticipating the influx of vessels, secure from the howling tempest. We understand this picture has been cleaned; it appears to have suffered, and although the complacency of the expression is undisturbed, the harmony of the effect is destroyed. It is left patchy and crude. The mezzotint is now the best conveyor of its chiaroscuro. No. 98, by Tresham, is a very clever sketch, harmoniously composed and broadly indicated. We envy the talented possessor so nice a bit.

Of Gainsborough, there are nine specimens, replete with his beautiful feeling for nature. No. 144, a landscape, with figures by Morland, reminds us of some of Teniers' larger works; but after the deep and majestic tones of Wilson, and the full vigorous touch of Morland, it requires some time to appreciate the sketchy performances of Gainsborough. No. 143, by the same artist, shews his versatility; and we cannot view his large portraits without surprise, when we reflect on the bold effect of his works, and the scratchy tinted style he employed. Take the separate parts of this portrait, they are feeble; look at the green curtain for instance, yet all these inequalities blend together into an imposing whole. There is no affectation about it, and, notwithstanding some landscape tints that obtrude in the face, it battles it bravely with its rivals. Gainsborough's feeling and taste carry him through, even when his weakness of execution seems likely to betray him.

West, Northcote, and Stothard, the aged triumvirs of the historic

realms grace these walls. It would, however, be superfluous to descant on their works, already known to the public.

There are some Wilson's in this collection, of superlative beauty. No. 74, *Diana and Acteon*, is a magnificent piece. The deep, rich, umbrageous cluster on the right, veiling the foreground in transparent depth, the clear and beautiful distance,—the sunny sky combine to render this work enchanting. We are happy to perceive it is in the hands of a nobleman who can appreciate it; and however irrelevant, we cannot resist expressing our admiration of so enlightened a patron of Art, as Lord Northwick. Mortimer's *Banditti* is a bold conception, but rather too sensibly reminding us of *Salvator Rosa*: he seems to have considered the advice of Demosthenes as applicable to painting, and bountifully supplies us with *action*; even in a quiescent state his figures are attitudinizing. No. 195, portrait of a lady, by Reynolds, is a beautiful work of Art. It reminds us forcibly of the texture of some of Titian's best heads; it appears enamelled, yet has the pulpi-ness of flesh. Contrast it with Lawrence's head, 193,—greasy and artificial,—heavy as the repeated touch could make it, yet withal, refined—the refinement of a courtier, as he supplies the place of pure unsophisticated reason, with the gloss of a subtle and meretricious eloquence. As a chalk drawing, this production would have been invaluable; and we can fancy the exquisite pencilling of the eyes and eyebrows, the luscious tinting of the lips, as they bloomed in native elegance on the card-board—but on the nobler surface, and with the more daring materials, it is a feeble attempt at over-refinement; the sentimentality that lingers about it is worse than the first simmer of a romance-reading attachment in its moon-lit abstractions. Had Lawrence been any thing but a man of superior talent, he might have been allowed to emit his spurious conceptions; but, when we recollect the style of his Pitt, and his Pope Pius, and find that he has done better, we are roused to exclaim against so fatal an example. It requires a philosopher to associate with lords and ladies, and escape untinted, unharmed. Where the mind is not allowed the contemplation of such a possibility as want of talent or beauty, the pencil imbibes the falsehood, and subsides from native vigour into courtly insipidity. No. 231, by Hogarth, in the same room, must have been originally, with due respect to Time's mellowing touch, a very exquisite picture; it has a Teniers-like delicacy of execution, unlike his general bold style. Above it is a portrait of Sheridan, by Reynolds, which appears to have suffered equally by the *improver*,—age; but not quite so mealy looking as 147, Cosway's portrait of Sheridan, a ghastly looking

individual, with a hectic flush in the cheek, that has evidently slipped away from its proper situation. This portrait must have been taken ere Bacchus had marked him for a devotee, for a more disconsolate looking author we never yet saw. Zoffany's unfinished theatrical piece, No. 89, is worthy of his high reputation. It is full of artistic feeling, shackled as it is by theatrical *impropriety*; the execution is bold yet careful, the figure of Macklin finely felt, and the head to the left remarkable for breadth and character; even the unfinished parts are replete with artistic feeling and masterly touch. The back-ground, figures, &c. are hinted at with much originality. Unfinished as it is, it is a fit companion to some splendid efforts by the same master in Mathews' gallery. No. 242, *Discovery of the Dead Body of Prince Arthur*, by Sir R. K. Porter, is a masterly effort, full of character, and of a pleasing tone. It is a pity, for the sake of the British school, such a talent was not matured.

Among the six De Louthembourg's in the collection, is Richard the First, in Palestine, No. 272, one of his most spirited sketches. Although mere power in the abstract is scarcely worth noticing, yet, united to a rapid conception of character and power of composition, it tends to form a very imposing painter, and partakes of the elements of genius. The genius that combines is one, and the genius that reproduces, another: the first teems with phantasies, hitherto unknown, and presents an harmonious combination of scattered properties; the last merely depicts with fidelity that which meets the eye. As these powers often trench on each other, and unite their efforts, it is difficult to establish with accuracy their actual rank. Although Teniers in general can only be referred to the latter, in some of his more fanciful works he soars to the former, and combines forms into a novel whole. Now, as De Louthembourg was obliged to supply from his fancy that action and composition which he could only hope to find feebly yielded by models; and as many of his subjects were in bygone ages, he had to combine dissevered objects, and unite them by the bond of fancy; he, therefore, asserts his claim to genius of the first class, although not of the first rank in that class.

It were exceeding our limits, however, to notice every picture of merit in this instructive collection; we do not pretend to do justice to the exhibition, but to offer a few hints on the benefits of comparison.

We cannot, in conscience, leave off while so many of our talented living artists demand our scrutiny: Yet with one hundred and twenty pictures on the list, we claim the forbearance of our readers, if we notice but a few.

No. 14, *Study from Nature*, by James Holland, a very talented young artist, who possesses a facility, which will not, we trust, mislead him. No. 18, *Rape of the Lock*, by Wyatt, boldly painted, the female rather stiff. No. 19, S. A. Hart, a spirited sketch; we wish he would aim at a little of that subtlety of execution, so perfectly exemplified in the Rembrandt (*The Woman taken in Adultery*), in the National Gallery. No. 20, *Calais Sands*, by John Wilson, cold and aerial; this painter has a very correct feeling for aerial perspective. No. 21, *Death of Edipus*, Fuseli, *vide the print*. No. 24, Costandi, F. P. Stephanoff, an opportunity of seeing the original of the pretty print to be embraced. No. 27, a *Village Girl*, W. Bradley. We take this opportunity of adverting to the English defect of slighting drapery, under the mistaken notion of producing breadth and ease. Mr. Bradley has a power of pencil we admire, his drawing is bold, and he seldom insults the judgment with the mystery of ignorance, yet both he and Mr. Faulkner suffer in our esteem for giving way to the sin of the school; splashy execution is rather a sign of weakness than strength, it indicates impatience as well as vigour. We are convinced these observations, offered in the spirit of fraternity will not be lost on the candid minds of these two gentlemen. Mr. Faulkner's carnations and greys are very beautifully introduced. No. 42, *Juliet*, is a fair specimen of his manner. No. 56, a *Cottage Child*, Mrs. W. Carpenter. This lady's works are too well known to require any assurance of her talent, she has a very artist-like feeling, and possesses power as well as delicacy of pencil. She has the merit also, of knowing what subjects are fit for ladies, as society is at present constituted, contenting herself in an humble sphere, without grasping at the epic. No. 57, a little bit by Naysmith, not so excruciatingly cold and frittered as most of his works. No. 67, *The Sisters*, by John Wood, possesses some delicacy and prettiness, but is exceedingly slight in parts, the hands, for instance, appear unfinished. We prefer No. 26, by the same artist, a well painted head, bolder than most by him, we trust he will take a lesson from himself and never paint under this. No. 81, *The Falconer*, by Wyatt, boldly painted as usual and richly coloured. No. 82, *Bonington*, a splendid bit of effect. No. 105, *Coast Scene with Figures*. W. Shayer, very nicely executed, the tone to the right is very agreeable. Mr. Uwins has a clever little sketch of *Comus*, No. 108. His head of a *Duenna* in the water colour room, is in the real style of art. For a man who does so well to have done so little in the great way is, —perhaps, no fault of his. No. 116, *Scene from Nature*, must have been taken from ill-nature, for it is sicklied over with a green fever.

No. 117, *Infant Hercules*, by Dawe, is well conceived but feebly coloured. No. 120, some nicely pencilled horses, by Davis. No. 140, *Landscape*, by Burnett, rather hard but full of talent, it possesses a minutiae we should like to see more often emulated. No. 145, by Woolmer, indicates talent, but of that sort not to be pursued too far—lurid glares and flickerings may do well in some subjects, but they are dangerous to be made the lights to our steps in art. No. 146, *E. Childe*, contains some nice tones. No. 153, *Landscape*, by Naysmith. A view of nature dwindled into insignificance. No. 157, *Puppy and Frog*, Landseer. Beautifully executed, the frog perfect—it leads us to expect the film closing over its eye as it pants under the puppy's paw.

No. 181, *Master's out, or the Disappointed Dinner Party*, by R. W. Buss, as funny as ever, and in some respects better executed than some of the same artist's broad stories. No. 200, a *Portrait*, by E. D. Leahy, a very nicely painted head, and considering the delicacy of its tone, suffers less than would be imagined from contact with the powerful Raeburn by its side. We think this the best head we ever saw by the artist. No. 217, *Johnny Gilpin*, by Stothard. Those who have read the poem have only to see the picture. No. 252, from the *Decameron*, H. Andrews, a rich little picture. No. 255, by Burnett, is clever, but the sword-fish clouds interfere, we are aware that they are sometimes "very like a whale." No. 256, *The Sketch Book*, B. E. Duppa, is too much of a sketch itself to deserve a place in this exhibition. Sketches are only valuable as indications of greatness. No. 259, a *Lady*, without a name, by R. Corbould, a pleasing cabinet picture. The rocks on which she sits are evidently shaped for her reception, a fact more agreeable to take notice of, than the reverse. No. 271, *Portrait of H. Johnstone, esq. as Norval*, by W. Allan, R.A. It was ill-judged to admit so feeble a specimen of academic powers. It is of a size to attract notice and of a nature to deserve criticism. We can only observe that it is not worthy of Mr. Allan. No. 277, *Sterne's Maria*, by Dukes, is a pretty little composition. No. 289, *Sacramental Plate*, by G. Lance. Such a powerful lance ought to keep his foes at a greater distance,—they are, in this instance, sundry domes and gondolas, which force themselves from want of air, into a comparison with the objects in the foreground. No. 294, by the same, as usual. No. 300, a sweet bit, by the Veteran Stothard, representing the death of Dido. No. 309, *The Angel Gabriel confining Sin and Death*, De Louthembourg. The painter in representing the confinement of one sin has let loose another, that of absurdity. By

the side of his really beautiful works to find such a bit as this! No. 184, a Study, by Knight. A boldly painted head, as broad and deep as if painted by night.

The water colour room is rich in interesting works: first on the list, Lawrence's magical drawings. His Head of Canova is exquisitely drawn, and the benign sanguine expression of the Italian sculptor is perfectly conveyed. There are two of the "noble captain," one, evidently in younger days, before refractory nations puzzled and worried him. No. 355, is a portrait of him as he is, in his calm nobility of aspect, the very beau ideal of the victor of Waterloo. No. 399, an exquisite drawing by Lawrence, the perfection of delicacy and taste. No. 441, a very spirited view of Lyme Regis, by C. Marshall. No. 423, a broad and characteristic Study of a Farmer, by Knight. No. 341, Sketches from Nature, by Watts, a very spirited series; and lastly, as a piece of industry, No. 335, by G. Scharf, a view of the Ladies' Fancy Fair, at Mr. Penn's.

We must, however, draw to a close, having already exceeded our limits, again adverting to our satisfaction at being able to compare the old worthies of the British school with each other, and slightly with the artists of the present day. Several of the pictures, although painted in England, are not by English painters. What do Lely, Zoffani, and others do amidst a circle of native talent. We cannot even venture to claim either West or Fuseli: it may gratify our *anti*-national vanity to inscribe them in our annals, but it is at variance with honour and justice. Let America and Switzerland retain the credit of these great men, leaving to our own country the galaxy of stars that brighten our fame. Neither the jealous slights of contemporaries, nor a prolonged residence in Italy annulled Poussin's birthright as a Frenchman; West was a painter in Italy before he was established in England.

Our principal object in noticing this exhibition was less to single out individual performances than to arrive at general conclusions by weighing conflicting styles; to trace the stream of art as it flows in various channels; to mark its influx and its ebb, and to distinguish the pure element from the muddy and troubled tide. We are conscious that we have but feebly performed the task, but we have been sincere in our attempt; we have stated our candid opinion, founded on matured observation, animated by an ardent desire for the welfare and honour of the British School of Art.

DRAMATIC EFFECTS.

As we do not profess to give any thing like a detailed account of the merit of plays and actors, we shall be excused for being rather choice in not venturing strange and startling surmises as to managers' intentions, actors' squabbles, or dramatists' failures. We must, however, advert to a circumstance of some import, as indicative of the state of the times and of dramatic property: we allude to the necessity of limiting the performances at one of the national theatres to three nights in the week; a restriction that argues either inability on the part of the manager to cater for the amusement of the public, or a disinclination on the part of the public to accept the managerial stimuli. We regret it, since we certainly anticipated from the manager's exertions, rational novelties, and the benefits arising from a slight infusion of French taste amongst the wild sturdy ranks of our English dramatists and actors. We were also led to believe that he was opposed to the system of starring, and hoped for a little of the French dramatic equality, instead of the English light and shade, in that painful sense when we are one moment enchanted by the majestic accents of a hero, and the next disgusted with the meagre unfeeling drawl of a *last rate*. We fear, without danger of being deemed partial, that we must side greatly with the public; it is not our general rule, since we like to protect the weak; yet we take into consideration the puerile and indecent trash that has been offered as a lure to a public, rude in its perceptions, it is true, yet withal capable of relishing better stuff than managers condescend to offer in general to its notice; we reflect that the ordinary sober, instructive and entertaining tone of a legitimate drama has given way to an exciting species of representation, calculated to awaken temporary wonder and applause, yet certain of eliciting ultimately, even from the least thoughtful, apathy if not disgust. Gorgeous spectacles, produced at stated periods, pleaded with the reflecting as temporary oblations at the shrines of childhood and mirth, but when prolonged beyond their legalized bounds—when they are substituted for the material they were intended only to decorate, the worthless subterfuge is consigned to contempt, and the authors of such truckling to a short-sighted policy are made too late to repent of their error. We regret the individual loss, yet triumph in the lesson forced upon speculators in *so important* a branch of literature as the drama, when, after the foolish assumption, that the public

likes rubbish, in the very face of noble evidence to the contrary, we find that the same poor stupid public has sense enough to outwit these dictators of the realms of common sense. Splendid wounds have been inflicted on the drama, gold and jewels have been heaped on the declining form of majesty, pathos has sunk abashed beneath the yell of the maniac or the mawkish whinings of drivelling sentimentality, and humour has fled the scene at the approach of filthy and flimsy quibbles aping the manliness of wit. The only excuse for this pollution of the stage is, that the English are so low in the scale of intellect that nought else will suit them; yet with this flimsy plea, impudently thrusting our judgment out of doors, we are told that managers must close theirs, even with this their favourite body guard of rubbish to attract the *low English public*. Fie, gentlemen managers all! it is unbecoming public functionaries, and ungrateful to discerning benefactors.

There are other causes, doubtless, of this sad decline, it would be unfair to refer it entirely to mismanagement. The march of intellect (nay, laugh not, kind reader), has pointed out various sources of amusement, not pursued to the same extent by our ancestors. Domesticity is invested with more powerful charms, the refinement emanating from the polite arts has had a considerable effect upon the elements of sociality, which are now considered worthy of being concentrated in the mild and beneficial sphere of the drawing room, instead of being scattered in the varied public attractions so admirably depicted in the Spectator. We must also, with due deference to past ages, arrogate to ourselves the superior share of delicacy. The joke that excited the smile of a beauty of those days would tinge the cheek of an English female in this age, with the exquisite livery of modest embarrassment. We cannot wonder then, that mothers should be unwilling to expose the purity of their daughters' minds to the nauseous and uninteresting atmosphere of a theatre as at present conducted.

Late dinner hours, indeed any thing for an excuse, is advanced as a probable reason for the dearth of visitors. We are not aware that all classes dine so late as to prevent their attendance; but nobles do! aye, and those who ape nobles do! and they are many. Agreed, but as nobles are not the chief supporters of our theatres, we may allow them to dine as late as they please. We will venture to affirm, that the patronage bestowed by the aristocracy is so trifling, compared to the humble public's privy purse, that they may to dinner with what appetite they may, resting assured, that as their attendance never made a theatre, their non attendance cannot ruin one. No dinner hour would

interfere with a desire to see a well written, well acted play, and our aristocracy, distinguished for intellectual attainments and liberal pursuits amidst the Corinthians of Europe, would waive their "constant custom" for objects worthy their regard, but it can hardly be supposed they would leave their refined spheres to court that which they are ashamed to applaud. We cannot help viewing this point as placing the aristocracy in a good light; with the decline of talent on the stage, there was a gradual decline of box visitors; yet even now, when the name of Knowles ensures us talent and *decency*, the tiers smile with beauty and fashion. The shuffling pleas, then, of large houses, late dinner hours, and patrician and plebeian stupidity, ought really to be considered as fairly worn out, while we humbly offer to the consideration of those who will read, the monitors most necessary in the present case. Starring, misplaced splendour (not of scenery), frivolity, late hours, and indecency. The licenser is over scrupulous of our religious delicacy, but seems to consider our social delicacy as fair game for his disciples in the realms of obscenity as it was once for him.

We trust the drama will revive, notwithstanding its present gloom; let the laws relating to dramatic property be once definitely arranged, and the road of talent smoothed, we may still hope to behold the brightness of the past irradiating the present, and feel assured, that on entering the walls of a national theatre, we shall not be forcibly reminded of our dramatic inferiority, but glean improvement and delight from the flawless mirror held up to nature.

The Doom Kiss and the Dark Diamond are the last novelties in the scenic department; we have not been able to attend the few representations they have been honoured with, and must defer our notices. Knowles has also appeared in William Tell, and Kean is performing with Macready. We have been several times, expecting to see something worth our editorial scrutiny: but really, with the exception of an occasional bit of redeeming stuff, we have seen nothing but the Irish Tutor, which even Power has not power to rescue from our contempt, and Ali Baba, or the Forty Thieves, upon which we can only *waste* our unqualified censure, as a piece of flimsy gewgaw trash, that pollutes the stage of a national theatre; these, and other pieces of a similar calibre, have assailed our nationality within the month.

At the Adelphi, Henriette, a twin sister of Victorine, has made her débüt. This piece is the second of a series of moral dramas, well adapted to inspire an *evanescent* thought or two on the precipices of the mortal state. Mrs. Yates acts with great feeling; her attitude and look, on presenting her father's dying appeal to her faithless and

degraded lover, is in the highest walk. The first scene is prettily and carefully composed, whilst the ball-room scene presents a novel feature in scenic contrivance, creditable to the mechanical powers of this theatre. The whole of the last scene is of deep interest, and the *tableau* at the close exceedingly pictorial. Hemming's costume is very elegant and correct. Altogether there is less to offend in this piece than in *Victorine*. There is much in it to make the majors blush.

We beg leave to offer a hint to the stage manager of the Surrey, for we cannot help being persuaded that, even on a fine day, the Alps are not seen from the smiling glades of Richmond; in the *Two Thompsons*, the Dr.'s house is reported to be situate at Richmond, yet the snow-tipped giants rise in majesty on the other side of the river. A gazetteer may be an useful adjunct to the stage property. *Kenilworth* offers little in a decorative point of view, except the costume of Raleigh, which is elegant. The drop scene is all but excellent.

The Strand Theatre has been closed; another specimen of the *something* that blights all theatrical speculations. It *may*, perhaps, be no easy task to suit the taste of

“ That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.”

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Finden's Landscape Illustrations, Part VIII.—The present number of this truly beautiful work contains seven views, including two vignettes. *Bacharach* and the *Castle of St. Angelo*, by *Turner*, are rather too artificial, in every part there are “cunnynge devyces” to lure the eye, the pale moon herself is thrust into an “Ethiop's ear” of a cloud to enhance her new-born crescent. Yet withal when a giant chooses to gambol, we cannot but be amazed—we feel no contempt for his powerful friskiness. The statues of the Angels on the Bridge of *St. Angelo* are *angeli delle tenebre*, a fit threshold to the shades of *Hades*. The projecting parapet of the castle is not in perspective. For moonlight give us the Temple of *Minerva*, which is in fact no moonlight at all, as the mysterious clouds thwart its benign influence and shed a tone delightful to the cultivated eye. We have so many glaring, cloudless moonlights, that it is refreshing to accompany *Turner* to *Cape Colonna*. *Mount Etna*, by *Purser*, is tranquil and beautiful. *Roberts* has given

a bold view of Sta. Sophia, with its countless minarets and domes. We do not quarrel with his view of the case, but we should like to see a representation of this wonderful pile, grand yet ridiculous, the distorted offspring "of one hundred architects, ten thousand workmen, the wealth of an empire, and the ingenuity of presiding angels," more broad in its effect of light and shade. Something very imposing might be made of this chief of fourteen imperial mosques. The Simplon, by Gasteneau, composes well, but the buildings in the middle distance appear unfinished. Verona, by W. Calcott, R.A. is very beautiful; the effect is Rembrandtish, the buildings and the foreground are exquisitely engraved, and both the painter and engraver have reason to be satisfied with it.

Memorials of Oxford, No. I.—Oxford, whether viewed as a seat of learning, or as an arena of Architectural beauty, must ever be interesting; its name is woven with our respect and even with our prejudices, and any attempt to perpetuate its attractions is deserving of encouragement, although we fear even "the schoolmaster" has not instilled the knowledge or feeling requisite to enjoy the memorials of Oxford, which must depend upon the enlightened few. To the enlightened few then, we venture to recommend a work, recommended to us by the names of Mackenzie and Le Keux, a guarantee for the excellence of the artistic part; and then for the literary department, we have no less a personage than the President of Trinity College! Under his management we may not have to feel, perhaps, as we have often felt before, that a collegian leaves college to learn English! Fie! say we so ourselves, but truth will out. The views of the Cathedral and the Chapter-house are engraved in a simple and unostentatious style, worthy the notice of some of our midnight gloom engravers; no part is slighted for effect's sake, and the tower in the first view is an exquisite piece of etching, receding to our eye's content. The Chapter-house, with its splendid gothic window and arched sides is drawn and engraved with the utmost care. The round table spoils it. The work is interspersed with wood-cuts to elucidate the interesting parts, lost in the general mass, but they are not equal to the engravings. We have been assured, from excellent authority, that we are too lenient in our criticisms; we really must submit to the charge, for we would rather forfeit the esteem of our readers, by being insipid yet honest, than for being unjust and witty. We have no *interest* to guide us in our remarks, but that of love for the Arts, ardent and conscientious.

Scraps and Sketches, by George Cruikshank, Part IV.—We were almost asleep with the ponderous lore of Oxford and the quaintness of its professor, when we caught a glimpse of our laughter loving acquaintance, who came rather too late last month for notice. We hope our Oxford friends will forgive the juxtaposition, Oxford *versus* Cruikshank; but we were willing to present a moral to those who choose to perceive it. The first plate introduces us to the various classes of "odd fish;" we looked in vain for the artist himself. "The salmon leap," to avoid the insertion of the slice, is very amusing. "The social elephants," "Jack and the lobster," and the other odd fish are very comic. In the second plate we sighed at the sight of "an easy place," an old anecdote well told. "Dress and undress," a delicate hint at an indelicate practice, submitted with due respect to the fair sex. "The Fiend's frying pan" is a piece of Cruikshank-morality, illustrating the *foul* nature of Bartholomew *fair*. Some may think the artist too severe, because they never yet saw Zamiel himself parading from booth to booth. "The cigar divan" is an exquisite sketch of lack-a-daisical enjoyment. In spite of the frowns of gravity, we cannot help quoting the salutation of two exquisites: "Pray, Lollop, do you expect your friends here this evening?"—"Why, no! for poor Lackadaisy has got a violent cold by being so indiscreet as to wash his hands in cold water, and Namby-Pamby is confined to his room with a very bad pimple on his chin." "The ale-house and the home," a lesson of universal application in this bibacious land. "The pleasure boat" presents a crew squalling to keep the weather company. But the sum of drollery is "the tell-tale"—poor wretch—he suffers by the tale evidently. He is addressing the admiral with—"Please your honor, Tom Towser has tied my pig-tail so tight, that I can't shut my eyes!" We must not venture to instance any more, lest the Epic sage repeat with a shrug, Caricature!

Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture, by I. C. Loudon, Part VI.—Our predecessor having already noticed this useful and entertaining work, we can only affirm, that as the Editor asserts his third object is to render Domestic Architecture a fit study for ladies, he has our best wishes for the success of the undertaking. It appears carefully got up, and is interspersed with a variety of explanatory wood cuts. The present number treats of furniture for

cottage-dwellings, and model designs for farm-houses and farmeries. With so excellent an arbiter of taste, we ought, indeed, to be pre-eminent in the dignity of mansions and the elegance of cottages.

Lodge's Portraits. No. XLIII.—Messrs. Harding and Lepard have done a service to the Fine Arts by the present undertaking; they have collected into a focus the scattered materials of a truly National Gallery, affording an ample field of observation to the physiognomist, the historian and the painter. The present number contains "Walter, first Lord Aston," "Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick," by Vandyke, and "Bishop Atterbury," by Kneller. The only one that deserves particular notice is the Earl of Warwick, admirably engraved by Mr. Robinson. Kneller's Atterbury is well executed, but is rather too much in his style of composition—body right—face left.

Fisher's National Portrait Gallery, Part XLIII.—The present number is of little interest, as far as the engravings are concerned—there are surely better originals to be found. The Duchess of Kent, the Bishop of Gloucester, and the late Lord Londonderry, are the three selected; the latter, (awkwardly extracted from a whole length by Lawrence) is but a mere bundle of robes, devoid of form or grace, with a head attached, that does little justice to the noble looking original. In so national a work, one so truly to be commended for its spirit and execution, the selection of originals cannot be too scrupulous.

View of Carlisle, from near Cummersdale. Lithographed by G. Barnard, from a Drawing by M. Nutter.—We trace in this print a power of pencil that will be more in unison with our views, when steeped in sunny hues; it possesses a depth truly valuable, if it were united to breadth. We augur well from this specimen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The City of London Artists' and Amateurs' Conversazione.—The first meeting this season took place on Thursday, the 15th November, at the London Coffee House, and was well attended. The large and elegant room at the back of the hotel is admirably adapted to the

purpose of meetings sensual or intellectual. It was well lighted, and with the works of Art spread in every direction presented a very imposing appearance. These meetings, of which there are already three, are well calculated to banish that hermit-spirit, which is too apt to pervade the devotees of the Fine Arts, and render them unfit for that intercourse which is conducive to the dignity of Art and the furtherance of individual interests. We are perfectly aware that a "Last Judgment" will not result from these *soirées*, yet may we anticipate their humanizing effect. Laws emanating from a secret conclave are viewed with suspicion and apathy; but promulgated *viva voce*, by those most interested in their extension and maintenance, leave a more favourable and lasting impression.

Beautiful drawings by Turner, Stothard's exquisite Canterbury Pilgrims, Prout's Venice, a beautiful miniature copy of a Holy Family after Raffael,* a very curious and brilliant specimen of old Frank, an unfinished proof of Lawrence's magnificent head of Scott; some very clever sketches by Lynch, Holst, and others; a most masterly drawing of the Portico of St. Martin's Church, before the alterations, by W. Hunt; an outline print of Delaroche's fine picture of Cromwell viewing the body of Charles, and others too numerous to mention, were laid in every direction, while the unintellectual, yet not unartistic refreshments, tea and coffee, were offered in the adjoining saloon. Altogether we wish this institution well. If it does not stimulate to original works, it may nevertheless tend to make artists less original. We are aware of the sullen views of many an artistic Diogenes towards these meetings, who imagines that all of real art is centered in the gloom and silence of his own den, exclaiming with Achilles,

" On these conditions will I breathe : till then,
I blush to walk among the race of men."

Phrenology.—It is with no small degree of pleasure that we have observed for some time past the progress of Phrenology in the more enlightened and respectable classes of society. Still was there one thing wanting to insure our confidence in, and rivet our admiration of a science that from this time forth will be looked upon as an indispensable requisite in the education of every artist; and this addendum was the sanction, the public sanction, of those best competent to judge of its merits, the heads of the medical profession. This is now for the first time awarded it in the Medical School of the London

* We are averse to notice copies where we seek originals, yet in this instance depart from our rule.

Hospital, by the establishment of a regular lecturer on Phrenology, in the person of that energetic and enthusiastic disciple of Spurzheim, Mr. Haley Holm. With considerable satisfaction we availed ourselves of the opportunity afforded us of attending the introductory lecture of the course on Saturday, 10th November, and were extremely gratified by the clear and interesting survey that was taken by that gentleman of the progress of Phrenology, from the time of its first introduction by Gall down to the present period. The discourse formed a complete history of the science, and was particularly interesting in its development of the gradual discoveries of its celebrated founder, and his pupil, Spurzheim, and the manner in which the striking and important facts increased in number and evidences beneath the energies of their powerful minds.

ACCORDING to a recent *census*, the number of artists at Paris, at the beginning of the year, was as follows: 1523 painters, draftsmen, and lithographers; 151 sculptors; 310 engravers (in line engraving, aquatinta, wood engravers, &c.): and 480 architects. To these may be added, 515 musical composers, and teachers of music, with about 1500 singers, and other professors of that art.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Munich.—The *Kunstverein*, or Association for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, founded at Munich, in the year 1824, and now consisting of about one thousand members, has given rise to similar institutions at Dusseldorf, Frankfort, Dresden, and other places, where their aim is principally directed towards promoting historical painting. This branch of the art, however, is so munificently and extensively patronized by the present king of Bavaria, that the Munich Association is almost obliged to confine its efforts to the encouragement of talent in other walks of art. As Munich is now become a general rendezvous for artists and amateurs from all parts of the continent, one of the objects of the *Kunstverein* has been to establish a *permanent exhibition, wherein the subjects are constantly changing*: (if any of our readers be bull-hunters, there is what looks tolerably like one, very much at their service). By this means, a taste for art is kept constantly nourished,—not overgorged for a few weeks, or a certain season of the year, and then left to fast for the remainder; while artists themselves have a constant stimulus to exertion given them. Every week some of the subjects already exhibited are removed, to make room for fresh ones which take their places, and which, in their turn, make way for others; so that there is a perpetual succession of novelties, and, in the course of every few weeks or so, the exhibition becomes totally different. This is, we think, an excellent plan, and might, to a certain extent, if not entirely, be adopted here at home, instead of cramming together, at the same time, double the number of pictures than can properly be viewed. From their funds for that purpose, the association annually purchases works to a certain amount; and these are afterwards shared among the members, by a kind of lottery. Besides this chance for a prize, each member annually receives a litho-

graphic engraving, after some work of importance, by a living artist. Such is the success hitherto attending this institution, that the association now reckons among its members amateurs in all parts of Germany, besides several at St. Petersburg, Paris, Prague, Venice, and even Rome. The funds of the society are considerable, as are likewise the donations and presents they receive. In the course of the present year, the sculptor Von Bandel has presented to it the busts of the four founders of the institution, viz. Stieler, Domenico Quaglio, Hess, and Gärtner; which form a welcome and appropriate embellishment to their gallery. The *Verein* annually sends each member a pamphlet, containing an account of what has been done in the course of the preceding twelvemonths; accompanied with short biographical notices of such artists, belonging to it, as have died within that period. Among those who died in 1830, are Probst, the architect of the New Isor Bridge; Joseph Klotz; Carl Yelott; Julius Oldoch; and in 1831, Maier; Cogels (an admirable landscape painter); I. Mayr; F. C. Rupprecht; and Carl Conjola.

St. Petersburg.—The northern capital of Russia is almost daily making some additions to its splendour. The works of that truly imperial structure, the St. Isaac's Church, continue to advance, and when completed it will undoubtedly be one of the grandest architectural monuments of the present age. Considerable progress has also been made with the grand triumphal arch, on the road leading to Peterhof; and the colossal pile of building, intended for the new Senate, is now nearly completed; while the Alexandra Theatre and the Alexander Column already display themselves to the admiration of every one. The theatre, which is in the *Nevsky Perspective*, and which was opened in the early part of September, is one of the most extraordinary edifices of its class, both for its magnitude, and the extraordinary solidity of its construction, which is such as to render it almost indestructible by fire, no timber being used except for the stage itself, the roof, proscenium, staircases, and columns of the boxes, being formed of cast or hammered iron, and bronze. Instead of benches the pit is furnished with commodious *fauteuils*, so that it is impossible for the audience to be squeezed up in that part of the house, as in our theatres; and in order to prevent that dangerous—we might say savage *rush* at the doors on a crowded night, which is one of the traits of true John-Bullism in this country, no more tickets are allowed to be issued than the house will conveniently hold,—a regulation fraught with so much good sense, that were it not for the shame of the thing, we might condescend to borrow the idea from the subjects of Nicholas, “the Kalmuk” as our newspapers facetiously style him.—The “Alexander Column” was raised on its base, on the 11th of September, in the presence of the imperial court and an immense multitude of spectators. The shaft is of a single piece of granite, from Finland, and is of a dark red hue, of sparkling metallic lustre, with an intermixture of grey quartz distributed in small irregular crystals. Thus it bears a considerable resemblance to the Syenite employed by the Egyptians for their monolithic statues; and like that is susceptible of the most exquisite polish.

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Arnold's Library of the Fine Arts, 1833.